

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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No. 1

TELEVISION DEAL FOR 83 FEATURES POINTS UP NEED FOR EXHIBITOR PROTECTION

In the issues of June 5 and July 3, 1948, this paper cautioned the exhibitors to guard against the booking of pictures, particularly reissues, that either had been or might be shown on television before they had a chance to show them in their theatres. It was suggested that an exhibitor, to protect himself, demand that the distributor include in the licensing agreement a clause warranting that the picture had not been shown on television, and that it will not be telecast for a specific period of time until after he shows it.

These words of caution were brought about by the fact that, at the time, WPIX, the *New York Daily News* television station, had acquired the nationwide television rights to twenty-four Alexander Korda features, as well as the New York area rights to thirty-eight other pictures, many of which were being offered to the exhibitors as reissues by independent film distributors who controlled only the theatrical distribution rights.

This problem has been brought to the fore again by the recent closing of deals that make available to this competitive medium eighty-one British and two American pictures, many of which have never been shown in the United States, and some of which are currently in release, either as reissues or new pictures.

The first of these deals is between the J. Arthur Rank Organization and the Standard Television Corporation, by which Standard acquires the television rights to some seventy J. Arthur Rank features, none of which have been produced later than 1944, half of which have been produced during the past two years, and approximately twenty of which have been, or are being, released by Eagle-Lion and the Prestige Pictures unit of Universal-International. Included also is one picture, "Fame of the Spur," which is being distributed now in the United States by Oxford Films. The titles of the films involved in this transaction are as follows:

"The Weaker Sex," "Hue and Cry," "Root of All Evil," "Silver Fleet," "It Always Rains on Sunday," "Johnny Frenchmen," "Nicholas Nickleby," "Waterloo Road," "Neutral Port," "Man at the Gate," "Ghost Train," "Woman in the Hall," "Bees in Paradise," "Calendar," "Carnival," "Flemish Farm," "Give us the Moon," "I'll Be Your Sweetheart," "I Thank You," "The Lamp Still Burns," "My Heart Goes Crazy," "Loves of Joanna Godden," "Mark of Cain," "Master of Bankdam," "Men of Two Worlds," "Millions Like Us," "Miss London, Ltd.," "School for Secrets," "Theirs is the Glory," "They Knew Mr. Knight," "Frozen Limits," "Bandwagon," "The Arsenal Stadium Mystery," "Murder in London," "Gasbags," "Hi Gang," "Back Room Boys," "Heart of Steel," "King Arthur Was a Gentleman," "Here Comes the Law," "Time Flies," "To 1,000 Women," "Uncle Silas," "When the Bough Breaks," "The Blind Goddess," "My Sister and I," "Vice Versa," "We Die at Dawn," "Bush Christmas," "A Canterbury Tale," "Don't Take it to Heart," "Easy Money," "I Know Where I'm Going," "A Place of One's Own," "The Tawny Pipit," "This Happy Breed," "Dear Octopus," "They Met in the Dark," "Cottage to Let," "Secret Mission," "The Great Mr. Handel," "Beware of Pity," "On Approval," "Fame is the Spur," "Good Time

Girl," "The Way We Live" and "The Lady Surrenders."

The WPIX deal covers the acquisition from different sources of nationwide television rights to thirteen top features, eleven British and two American, which were originally released in the United States by five of the major distributors during the period from 1937 to 1941. These include: "Pygmalion," "Under the Red Robe," "Thunder in the City," "Major Barbara," "Sidewalks of London," "The Young in Heart," "South Riding," "Dinner at the Ritz," "Dark Journey," "The Beachcomber," "A Star is Born," "Jamaica Inn" and "Wings of the Morning."

Under the terms of the Rank-Standard deal, according to a spokesman for Standard, each picture that is being or will be made available to theatres will not be shown on television in a particular area until after a specified time following completion of all theatre playdates in that area. Just how much time was not mentioned because of the claim that it varied with each picture.

There appears to be something hazy about this deal, for, according to a news report in *Showmen's Trade Review*, the list of pictures is subject to revision "since the deal is subject to contracts that may have been entered into with other distributors." *Showmen's* points out that Oxford Films, which is distributing "Fame is the Spur," claims that it has the theatre exhibition rights for seven years, and that the picture cannot be sold to television during that period. *Showmen's* states also that the Rank Organization office, when asked what provisions were made for situations like this, professed to be ignorant of the details involved in the deal.

In contrast, the WPIX deal is definite. The thirteen pictures, in the order given above, are to be televised at the rate of one a week, beginning Friday, January 6, on a program to be known as "Premiere Theatre," sponsored by Doubleday and Company. According to a WPIX spokesman, there are no restrictions as to when the pictures may be televised—they may be shown day-and-date with theatres, and even ahead of them. As a matter of fact, they have already been booked by fifteen other television stations throughout the country.

Of the pictures included in the WPIX deal, "Pygmalion" and "Major Barbara" are, to the best knowledge of this writer, the only two that are being offered to the theatres at the present time as reissues.

With almost four million television receivers now in use throughout the country, the television audience has become so vast that the matter of motion picture telecasts is becoming a serious competitive problem. And the competition is bound to become keener as time goes on, for it is estimated that, in five years, twenty million receivers will be in operation with a potential audience of seventy-five million.

Obviously, exhibitors can do little to stop motion picture telecasts, for hundreds of pictures are being offered to the television stations by either the original producers or those who have bought the pictures from them outright. These, fortunately, are mostly old pictures that were produced on modest budgets and are of little value to the exhibitors today, although they do, to an extent, serve to undermine theatre attendance when shown on television.

But the exhibitors, by demanding proper guarantees in the licensing agreement, can do something to protect themselves against the possibility of booking a picture, either

(Continued on back page)

**"Montana" with Errol Flynn,
Alexis Smith and S. Z. Sakall**

(Warner Bros., no rel. date set; time, 76 min.)

A fair Western melodrama. There is nothing extraordinary about it, but the Technicolor photography and the marquee value of the stars' names are undeniable box-office assets. The story, which is another variation of the sheepherders-versus-cattlemen theme, offers little that is novel and is rather slow in spots because of the romantic by-play, but on the whole it offers enough action and excitement to satisfy the not-too-critical Western addicts. Errol Flynn, as the courageous sheepman who bucks the cattle ranchers, and Alexis Smith, as the headstrong heroine who opposes him but eventually falls for his charms, measure up to the demands of their stock characterizations. S. Z. Sakall supplies a fair quota of comedy as an itinerant peddler. The action takes place in 1879:—

Flynn, a sheepman seeking new pasturage for his flocks, comes to Montana in defiance of the cattle barons, who were determined to keep the territory free from sheep. To scare him off, the cattlemen raid his camp and shoot up the sheep. Flynn, masquerading as a partner of Sakall, goes into town to learn what he can about the cattlemen. He discovers that they were headed by Alexis Smith, owner of a large ranch, and by Douglas Kennedy, her fiance, who, too, was a large ranch owner. Flynn cultivates Alexis' friendship, wins her love, and eventually persuades her to lease some of her own land to him for "farming," keeping the fact that he was a sheepman secret. But Alexis discovers his identity before he can move his flocks, and lashes him across the face with her whip for deceiving her. Unable to move the sheep onto the land he had leased from Alexis, Flynn enlists the help of the territory's small ranchers by proving to them that the big cattlemen planned to crowd them out. A disastrous clash is set off when Kennedy and his men start a cattle stampede to block the oncoming sheep. Kennedy, thrown from his saddle, is trampled to death by the cattle. Forced to move the sheep through town, Flynn finds his way blocked by Alexis, who threatens to shoot him down unless he turns back. She fires point blank at him when he refuses. The wound, however, proves superficial, and they wind up in each other's arms.

It was produced by William Jacobs and directed by Ray Enright from a screen play by James R. Webb, Borden Chase and Charles O'Neal, based on a story by Ernest Haycox. Suitable for the family.

**"The Great Rupert" with Jimmy Durante,
Terry Moore and Tom Drake**

(Eagle-Lion, no rel. date set; time, 86 min.)

Very good family entertainment. The story, which has a squirrel showering money down upon an impoverished vaudevillian family headed by Jimmy Durante, is completely implausible, but clever handling has turned it into a charming comedy, rich in human interest and sentiment, and filled with many hilarious situations. It should receive considerable word-of-mouth advertising. Durante makes the most of the mirth-provoking gags and situations, giving the proceedings a decided lift by his inimitable brand of humor. The youngsters in particular should get a great kick out of the squirrel, a puppet, which George Pal, the producer, has ingeniously animated. Worked into the story is a pleasant romance between Terry Moore and Tom Drake. Considerable laughter is provoked by Frank Orth, as Durante's bank-hating landlord:—

Unable to pay his rent, Jimmy Conlin, owner of Rupert, a trained squirrel, is evicted from his dingy quarters, a converted garage adjoining the home of Frank Orth, his stingy landlord. Without funds to even feed Rupert, Conlin sets the squirrel free in the park, but the animal makes its way back to the converted garage, where it holes up in the walls between Orth's home and the garage. Shortly thereafter the quarters are rented by Jimmy Durante, an unemployed acrobat who did an act with Queenie Smith, his wife, and Terry Moore, their daughter. Terry falls in love with Tom Drake, Orth's son. In the course of events, Orth receives a \$1,500 dividend check from a gold mine he had invested in years previously, and is informed that a similar amount would be sent to him each week. Orth, having no faith in banks, drills a hole in a baseboard in his home and hides the money in the walls, adjoining the squirrel's nest. The squirrel tosses the money out into Durante's quarters, just as his wife prays for financial assistance. The process is repeated every time Orth gets another check, and Durante, unaware of the squirrel's existence, believes that his wife's prayers are being answered. Flush with money and being naturally big-hearted, Durante helps finance small business people and before long the whole community thrives. Complications develop when Federal tax agents and the FBI visit Durante to investigate the source of his wealth. He tells them the truth, but he is unable to prove it because, by this time, Orth's dividends had been stopped. But when the squirrel takes a lighted cigarette into his hole and starts a fire, the truth comes out when Orth starts wailing about his money going up in flames. Fortunately, the investments made by Durante prove profitable, enabling him to rebuild the house and to return the money to Orth.

The screen play was written by Laszlo Vadnay, based on a story by Ted Allen. Irving Pichel directed it.

Fine for the entire family.

**"The Blonde Bandit" with Gerald Mohr,
Dorothy Patrick and Robert Rockwell**

(Republic, Dec. 22; time, 60 min.)

A fairly good program melodrama, with enough action, intrigue and excitement to fulfill the requirements of a supporting feature. The story has spots of implausibility, but on the whole it holds one's interest throughout because of the dilemma faced by the heroine who, framed for a robbery, turns stool pigeon against a gambling racketeer to win leniency from the district attorney, only to fall in love with the man she had agreed to spy on. The closing scenes, where the heroine foils the attempt of two crooked detectives to kill the racketeer, are exciting. Although the players mean little at the box-office, their individual performances are competent:—

Stranded without funds in a big city after narrowly escaping marriage to a bigamist, Dorothy Patrick sells her diamond ring to Alex Frazer, a jeweler. Frazer, seeking to collect insurance money, robs his own store and frames Dorothy for the crime. Gerald Mohr, head of a gambling syndicate, to which Frazer owed a considerable sum, suspects that the jeweler had framed the girl and puts up a bond for her release. Robert Rockwell, the district attorney, who had been trying unsuccessfully to trap Mohr, promises Dorothy leniency when her case comes up if she would cultivate Mohr's friendship and obtain evidence needed to prosecute him. Eager to get out

of her own predicament, Dorothy agrees. She plays up to Mohr and eventually learns the details of how his organization operated, and learns also that he was buying protection from Larry J. Blake and Charles Cane, two crooked detectives. When Mohr proposes marriage to her, Dorothy comes to the realization that she was truly in love with him. She goes to Rockwell and informs him that she intended to tell Mohr the truth about her spying on him. Meanwhile the two detectives, learning that Dorothy was working with Rockwell, obtain incriminating evidence against Mohr and plan to kill him for "resisting" arrest. But first they tell him that Dorothy was the double-crosser, and that he must leave town immediately. Dorothy, learning of their plot, notifies Rockwell who, aided by the police, pick up the crooked detectives before they can kill Mohr. Mohr himself is brought to justice, but Dorothy, whose own innocence had been proved by this time, promises to wait for him.

It was produced by Sidney Picker and directed by Harry Keller from a story and screen play by John K. Butler. Unobjectionable morally.

"South Sea Sinner" with Shelley Winters, Macdonald Carey and Helena Carter

(Univ.-Int'l, January; time, 88 min.)

Although this South Sea Island adventure melodrama has an involved plot and exaggerated characterizations, it has the ingredients that should put it over with most audiences, for there is plentiful virile action, some comedy, several songs, and romantic interest. It is, however, strictly adult fare, for the emphasis is on sex and suggestive situations, and its atmosphere of waterfront dives, with its brawls and law-breakers, give it a low moral tone. Shelley Winters, as a hip-swinging cafe singer, a sort of "Sadie Thompson" character, plays the role to the hilt and, despite her ribald actions, she manages not to be offensive because of her likeable personality. The story lacks conviction, but the acting is good and some of the photography is noteworthy.

The involved plot has Macdonald Carey, a crewman on a tramp steamer, landing on the island of Oraca for medical attention after an emergency operation had been performed on him by Frank Lovejoy, the ship's tough doctor. Luther Adler, oily proprietor of a waterfront cafe, recognizes Carey as a former employee of a rubber company suspected of selling out to the Japanese. Both Carey and Lovejoy become attracted to Shelley, a singer in Adler's cafe, but she shows a preference for Carey. Complications develop when Helena Carter, Carey's former sweetheart, arrives on the island with John Ridgeley and Art Smith, Carey's former employers. It comes out that both Ridgeley and Smith, pretending to be Carey's friends, had secretly made deals with the Japanese but had cleverly thrown suspicion on Carey, who had thus far been unable to clear himself. Adler, learning of the frame-up through a henchman, sets out on a plan to blackmail Ridgeley and Smith. In the course of the complicated events, Adler becomes jealous over Shelley's attentions to Carey, and hits upon a scheme to get him out of the way by framing him for the murder of Smith, whom he (Adler) kills. The plan misses fire, and Adler, to divert suspicion from himself, makes a deal with Shelley to testify at the inquest that she had been with him when they heard Smith "shoot himself." In turn for her cooperation, Adler promises to reveal that Ridgeley had framed Carey on the Japanese deal. In the end, however, the authorities learn the truth, arresting Adler

for the murder, and Ridgeley for dealing with the enemy. Meanwhile Shelley discovers that Carey was still in love with Helena. She gives him up and turns her attentions to Lovejoy.

It was produced by Michel Kraike and directed by Bruce Humberstone from a screen play by Joel Malone and Oscar Brodney, based on a story by Ladislav Fodor and Laszlo Vadnay. Adult fare.

"When Willie Comes Marching Home" with Dan Dailey, Corinne Calvet and Colleen Townsend

(20th Century-Fox, Feb.; time, 82 min.)

A laugh riot! Revolving around the misadventures of a small-town soldier, it is one of the funniest comedies that have been produced in some time, and should go over in a big way with all types of audiences. Thanks to the well-written script, the expert direction, and the competent acting, the picture keeps one laughing throughout, for it abounds with hilarious situations, clever gags, subtle satire and a smattering of slapstick.

Briefly, the story has Dan Dailey acclaimed as a hero in his small hometown when he becomes the first to enlist after the attack on Pearl Harbor. His misadventures begin when he turns out to be an expert aerial gunner and the Army decides to station him at an airfield near his home as an instructor, despite his pleas that he be given combat duty overseas. Kept at the airfield for more than two years, Dailey soon finds himself the most unpopular man in town, shunned by his friends and neighbors, who look upon him as a "gold-bricker." He finally gets his wish for combat duty when he is ordered to replace a sick gunner on a B-17 bound for England. From then on he goes through an incredible series of adventures, beginning with his landing behind enemy lines in France when the plane runs out of gas and he is ordered to bail out. He is rescued by a band of Maquis, who entrust him with the first films ever taken of German V-2 launching sites and manage to put him aboard an English R-boat, which speeds him back to Army Headquarters in London through a hail of bombs and bullets. After intensive questioning in England, he is shipped by fast plane to Washington, where he undergoes another round of questioning, after which he is given a month's furlough. All this takes place within a period of three days, and, when he returns home and relates his experiences, no one believes that he had been overseas. All become convinced, however, when he is recalled to Washington to be personally decorated by the President for bravery above and beyond the call of duty.

A brief synopsis of the story cannot do justice to the plot's many highly amusing details. Dailey's desperate pleas to be sent overseas, his experiences with the French underground, his questioning by the Army brass, and his fright when he finds himself in a psychopathic ward after being ordered to a hospital for rest, make for situations that will keep audiences roaring with laughter. Dailey does outstanding work as the hapless hero, and is given excellent support by William Demarest, as his father; Colleen Townsend, as his sweetheart; and Corinne Calvet, as the attractive leader of the Maquis.

It was produced by Fred Kohlmar and directed by John Ford from a screen play by Mary Loos and Richard Sale, based on a story by Sy Gomberg. The cast includes James Lydon, Lloyd Corrigan, Evelyn Warden and others. Fine for the entire family.

new or old, that has been or may be televised before they have had the chance to show it.

The aforementioned Rank-Standard and WPIX deals are perfect examples of why an exhibitor must take steps to protect himself, for in both cases the pictures involved are being handled by theatrical distributors who have no control over the television rights. "Major Barbara," to mention one of the pictures, has been making the rounds in New York City as a reissue and is currently playing in four theatres. Yet it is scheduled to be televised in the New York area within several weeks and, if any other theatres in the area should be playing it at the time, it is reasonable to assume that their attendance will drop sharply, before as well as after the telecast, which undoubtedly will be publicized well in advance.

The film salesman will, of course, assure the exhibitor that the picture he buys will not be telecast until long after he plays it, but as this paper has stated repeatedly a salesman's assurances, no matter how sincere he may be, will mean nothing unless they are written into the contract. It is the only way by which an exhibitor may protect his interests.

In cases where the distributor has control over both the theatrical and television rights to a picture, it should be a simple matter for him to warrant in the license agreement that it has not and will not be shown on television for a specified period of time. In cases where a distributor has a good reissue but has no control over the television rights, an exhibitor who books the picture will be taking a risk, for he may find himself playing it at a time when his patrons had seen it or will see it shortly on television as a free show.

One other precaution should be taken by an exhibitor to fully protect himself against unfair competition from motion picture telecasts, and that is to insist that the warranty include a provision to the effect that the picture has not been shown on television under any other title, such as happened eighteen months ago with four Hal Roach "streamliner" comedies televised by WPIX.

"Hollywood Varieties"

(Lippert-Screen Guild, Jan. 14; time, 60 min.)

Worth booking on a double bill in secondary theatres. It is a series of vaudeville acts, with well known new and old entertainers, strung together to make a picture of feature length. There is no story whatever connected with the arranging of the approximate twenty acts, which has about everything one expects to see in a vaudeville show—dancing, singing, roller skating, trained seals, comedians, acrobats, trained dogs and a master of ceremonies. Some are interesting, some fair, and some just so-so. But on the whole the picture should get by with those who are not too fussy. It stars Robert Alda and the Hoosier Hot Shots, and features the following entertainers in the different acts:

Shaw and Lee; Glenn Vernon and Eddie Ryan; Peggy Stewart; De Pina Troupe; Lois Ray; Sandy and his Seals; Paul Gordon; Shavo Sherman; Charles Cirillo; Cliff Taylor; Three Rio Brothers; Britt Wood; Twirl, Whirl and a Girl; The Four Dandies; Hector and his Pals; Johnson Brothers; Dolores Parker; Sammy Wolfe; Aurora Roche; Russell Trent; and the Eight Carlyle Dancers.

It was produced by June Carr and Paul Schreiber, and directed by Paul Landres.

Suitable for the family.

"The Glass Mountain" with Valentina Cortesa and Michael Denison

(Eagle-Lion, Nov.; time, 97 min.)

A fairly good British-made romantic drama, best suited for audiences who enjoy fine classical music, operatic singing, and magnificent scenic backgrounds. Its story about a devoted husband, an English composer who is torn between love for his understanding wife and for a gentle Italian girl who had saved his life during the war, is tender and has qualities that should appeal to women in particular. The acting is competent, with Valentina Cortesa outstanding as the Italian heroine; she brings to the screen a refreshing charm not yet caught in the American pictures in which she has appeared. Much of the action was shot in the Italian Dolomites:—

Michael Denison, a successful English composer, joins the Air Force with the outbreak of war and, during operations over Italy, his plane crashes in the Dolomites. Badly injured, he is rescued by Valentina, a nurse, who leads him to a partisan's hut in the mountains. A great friendship grows up between the two during his convalescence, and he learns from her the legend of the Glass Mountain, a peak high in the Dolomites, which was supposed to echo the name of your true love. With the coming of peace, Denison returns to his wife (Dulcie Gray), and begins writing an opera inspired by the legend. Away from Valentina, he becomes restless and is unable to recapture the happiness he had known with Dulcie before the war. Dulcie, understanding the situation, suggests that he return to Italy to finish his opera, fervently hoping that he will return to her. Once in Italy, Denison renews his romance with Valentina and completes the opera, which is accepted for production by the officials of the opera house in Venice. Meanwhile Dulcie, having received a letter from Denison asking her for a divorce, tells her troubles to Sebastian Shaw, a Scottish poet and old friend of Denison's. Shaw goes to Venice, where he tries to convince Valentina that she was wasting her time trying to be part of Denison's life. She suspects that he still loved his wife when she learns that he had invited her to attend the first night of the opera. En route to Venice, Dulcie's plane crashes on the Glass Mountain, but Valentina keeps the news from Denison until after he finishes conducting the opera. As he rushes out to join the rescue party and reunite with Dulcie, Valentina realizes that he is not her true love.

It was produced by Fred Zelnik and Joseph Janni, and directed by Henry Cass, from a screen play by Mr. Janni, Mr. Cass and Jack Hunter.

Adult entertainment.

"Blondie's Hero" with Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 60 min.)

A good addition to the "Blondie" series. There are many comical situations, and several that offer thrills. The thrilling situations are brought about by the manner in which Arthur Lake, having enlisted in the Army Reserve Corps, tries to show his wife how to operate a tank; they have many narrow escapes, wrecking barracks, colliding with other Army vehicles, and almost running down people. Audiences will roar with laughter every time Lake swerves the tank to avoid damage. The direction is good, and the photography sharp:—

While out walking with his dog Daisy and her five pups, Arthur Lake is beaten by a fruit store man because the dogs had sniffed around his fruit stand. The altercation is noticed by an Army sergeant, who convinces him that Army training would enable him to defend himself against such attacks. Before long, Lake finds himself recruited into the Army Reserve Corps. William Frawley, a confidence man, learning that Lake had made the last mortgage payment on his house, approaches him and assures him that he can sell the house for four times the amount it cost him. Lake believes Frawley, but tells him not to say anything to Penny Singleton, his wife, for he wanted to surprise her. He instructs Frawley how to get into the house without a key. While Lake is training on the first week-end at the camp, Penny, the children and the dogs visit him. Meanwhile Frawley and his accomplices establish themselves in Lake's home, pose as the owners, and offer it for sale at a very low figure. They sell it to a home-hunting couple and make off with a \$2,000 down payment. The new owners are surprised to learn that they had been taken for suckers when Lake and his family return. Penny, however, determines to find the impostors and recover the money for the innocent buyers. She eventually succeeds through a clever ruse. Lake, now well trained, beats up the crooks, then gives the fruit store man a similar treatment, thus evening up the score.

The story and screen play are by Jack Henley, based upon the Chic Young comic strip. Ted Richmond produced it, and Edward Bernds directed it.

Good for the entire family.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXXII

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1950

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Golden Stallion, The—Republic (67 min.)	not reviewed
Grand Canyon—Screen Guild (65 min.)	152
Great Dan Patch, The—United Artists (94 min.)	118
Great Lover, The—Paramount (80 min.)	151
Great Sinner, The—MGM (110 min.)	107
Guilty of Treason—Eagle-Lion (86 min.)	210
Hasty Heart, The—Warner Bros. (101 min.)	195
Haunted Trails—Monogram (60 min.)	not reviewed
Heiress, The—Paramount (115 min.)	146
Hidden Room, The—Eagle-Lion (98 min.)	210
Hold That Baby—Monogram (64 min.)	111
Holiday Affair—RKO (87 min.)	187
Holiday in Havana—Columbia (73 min.)	163
Horsemen of the Sierras—Columbia (56 min.)	not reviewed
House Across the Street—Warner Bros. (69 min.)	134
I Married a Communist—RKO (72 min.)	154
Inspector General, The—Warner Bros. (102 min.)	186
Intruder in the Dust—MGM (87 min.)	167
It's a Great Feeling—Warner Bros. (85 min.)	123
I Was a Male War Bride—20th Cen.-Fox (105 min.)	131
Jiggs & Maggie in Jackpot Jitters—Monogram (67 min.)	143
Joe Palooka in the Counterpunch—Monogram (65 min.)	152
Johnny Holiday—United Artists (92 min.)	198
Johnny Stool Pigeon—Univ.-Int'l (75 min.)	115
Jolson Sings Again—Columbia (96 min.)	130
Kid from Cleveland, The—Republic (89 min.)	147
Kiss for Corliss, A—United Artists (88 min.)	172
Lady Takes a Sailor, The—Warner Bros. (99 min.)	195
Lawless Code—Monogram (58 min.)	not reviewed
Lost Boundaries—Film Classics (99 min.)	106
Love Happy—United Artists (84 min.)	162
Madame Bovary—MGM (114 min.)	126
Make Mine Laughs—RKO (63 min.)	130
Malaya—MGM (94 min.)	194
Man on the Eiffel Tower, The—RKO (96 min.)	202
Mary Ryan, Detective—Columbia (68 min.)	182
Masked Raiders—RKO (60 min.)	not reviewed
Master Minds—Monogram (64 min.)	199
Miss Grant Takes Richmond—Columbia (87 min.)	154
Mississippi Rhythm—Monogram (68 min.)	118
Mr. Soft Touch—Columbia (92 min.)	123
Mrs. Mike—United Artists (99 min.)	207
My Foolish Heart—RKO (98 min.)	170
My Friend Irma—Paramount (103 min.)	135
Mysterious Desperado—RKO (60 min.)	not reviewed
Navajo Trail Raiders—Republic (60 min.)	not reviewed
Not Wanted—Film Classics (94 min.)	108
Oh, You Beautiful Doll—20th Century-Fox (93 min.)	151
On the Town—MGM (98 min.)	198
Once More, My Darling—Univ.-Int'l (94 min.)	122
Once Upon a Dream—Eagle-Lion (87 min.)	110
One Last Fling—Warner Bros. (64 min.)	106
Paid in Full—Paramount (105 min.)	206
Passport to Pinlico—Eagle-Lion (84 min.)	162
Pinky—20th Century-Fox (102 min.)	159
Pioneer Marshal—Republic (60 min.)	not reviewed

Pirates of Capri, The—Film Classics (94 min.).....195
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Range Justice—Monogram (57 min.).....not reviewed
 Range Land—Monogram (56 min.)not reviewed
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 Reckless Moment, The—Columbia (82 min.)171
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 Red, Hot and Blue—Paramount (84 min.)107
 Red Light—United Artists (83 min.)134
 Renegades of the Sage—Columbia (56 min.)..not reviewed
 Riders in the Sky—Columbia (70 min.).....not reviewed
 Riders of the Dusk—Monogram (57 min.)..not reviewed
 Riders of the Range—RKO (61 min.)not reviewed
 Ringside—Screen Guild (63 min.)118
 Roaring Westward—Monogram (55 min.) ..not reviewed
 Rope of Sand—Paramount (104 min.)107
 Roseanna McCoy—RKO (89 min.)134
 Rugged O'Riordans, The—Univ.-Int'l (76 min.)206
 Rusty's Birthday—Columbia (60 min.)168

Samson & Delilah—Paramount (112 min.)170
 San Antone Ambush—Republic (60 min.)...not reviewed
 Sands of Iwo Jima—Republic (110 min.)204
 Satan's Cradle—United Artists (60 min.)...not reviewed
 Savage Splendor—RKO (60 min.)119
 Shadows of the West—Monogram (59 min.)..not reviewed
 She Wore a Yellow Ribbon—RKO (103 min.)122
 Side Street—MGM (81 min.)206
 Six-Gun Mesa—Monogram (57 min.)not reviewed
 Slattery's Hurricane—20th Century-Fox (83 min.) ...127
 Song of Surrender—Paramount (93 min.)150
 South of Death Valley—Columbia (54 min.)..not reviewed
 South of Rio—Republic (60 min.)not reviewed
 Sons of New Mexico—Columbia (71 min.)..not reviewed
 Spring in Park Lane—Eagle-Lion (91 min.)155
 Square Dance Jubilee—

Lippert-Screen Guild (78 min.)192
 Story of Molly X, The—Univ.-Int'l (82 min.)182
 Story of Seabiscuit, The—Warner Bros. (93 min.)...175
 Strange Bargain—RKO (68 min.)154
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Task Force—Warner Bros. (116 min.)142
 Tell It to the Judge—Columbia (87 min.)187
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 There's a Girl in My Heart—Allied Artists (79 min.)...190
 They Live by Night—RKO (95 min.)176
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 Tokyo Joe—Columbia (88 min.)166
 Top O' the Morning—Paramount (99 min.)127
 Tough Assignment—Screen Guild (64 min.)183
 Trail of the Yukon—Monogram (67 min.)126
 Trapped—Eagle-Lion (78 min.)158
 Traveling Saleswoman—Columbia (75 min.)211
 Twelve O'Clock High—20th Century-Fox (132 min.)...207

Under Capricorn—Warner Bros. (117 min.).....147
 Undertow—Univ.-Int'l (70½ min.)194

Western Renegades—Monogram (56 min.)..not reviewed
 Whirlpool—20th Century-Fox (97 min.)191
 White Heat—Warner Bros. (114 min.)138
 Without Honor—United Artists (69 min.)186
 Woman Hater—Univ.-Int'l (69½ min.)140
 Woman in Hiding—Univ.-Int'l (92 min.)203

Yes Sir, That's My Baby—Univ.-Int'l (82 min.)131
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Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

223 The Reckless Moment—Mason-BennettNov.
 224 Tokyo Joe—Bogart-Knox-MarlyNov.
 250 Riders in the Sky—Autry (70 m.).....Nov.
 211 Rusty's Birthday—Donaldson-LitelNov. 3
 212 Barbary Pirate—Woods-MarshallNov. 10
 261 Renegades of the Sage—Starrett (56 m.)...Nov. 24
 252 Feudin' Rhythm—Eddy ArnoldDec.
 225 Tell It to the Judge—Russell-CummingsDec.
 229 And Baby Makes Three—Young-HaleDec.
 209 Prison Warden—Baxter-LeeDec. 8
 263 Frontier Outpost—Starrett (55 m.).....Dec. 29
 227 All the King's Men—Crawford-DruJan.
 226 The Traveling Saleswoman—Davis-DevineJan.
 Sons of New Mexico—Autry (71 m.)Jan.
 214 Mary Ryan, Detective—Hunt-LitelJan. 5
 218 Chinatown at Midnight—Hurd Hatfield.....Jan. 19

Eagle-Lion Features

(165 West 46th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

011 The Hidden Room—British castOct.
 008 Spring in Park Lane—British castNov.
 012 The Glass Mountain—British castNov.
 009 Port of New York—Brady-CarterDec.
 956 Cowboy & the Prizefighter—Bannon (59 m.)...Dec.
 013 The Gay Lady—British castDec.
 010 Passport to Pimlico—British castDec.
 I'll Be Seeing You—reissueDec.
 Hit the Ice—reissueDec.
 The Sundowners—Preston-Wills-Barrymore ...Jan.
 Never Fear—Forrest-BrasselleJan.
 Give Us This Day—Wanamaker-PadovaniJan.
 The Third Man—Cotten-Valli-WellesJan.
 014 Sarumba—Dowling-WhalenJan.

Film Classics Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

Project X—Keith AndesNov. 14
 The Pirates of Capri—Hayward-BarnesDec. 1
 Guilty Bystander—Scott-EmersonJan.

Lippert-Screen Guild Features

(255 Hyde St., San Francisco 2, Calif.)

4903 Square Dance Jubilee—Barry-HughesNov. 11
 4914 Red Desert—Barry-NealDec. 3
 4915 Tough Assignment—Barry-Steele-Brodie ...Dec. 17
 4916 Hollywood Varieties—Hoosier Hot Shots ...Jan. 14
 4917 Radar Secret Service—Howard-NealJan. 28
 Everybody's Dancin'—Lane-JacksonFeb. 11
 4919 Western Pacific Agent—Taylor-RyanFeb. 18
 4926 Crooked—Ellison-HaydnFeb. 25
 4902 Baron of Arizona—Price-DrewMar. 4

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

6 That Forsyte Woman—Garson-Flynn-Pidgeon...Nov.
 7 Adam's Rib—Tracy-HepburnNov.
 8 Tension—Totter-BasehartNov.
 10 Challenge to Lassie—Gwenn-CrispDec.
 11 On the Town—Kelly-Ellen-SinatraDec.
 15 Johnny Eager—reissueDec.
 12 Malaya—Tracy-StewartJan.
 13 Ambush—Taylor-Hodiak-DahlJan.
 14 East Side-West Side—Stanwyck-MasonJan.
 9 Intruder in the Dust—Brian-Jarman, Jr.Feb.
 Battleground—Johnson-Hodiak-MurphyFeb.
 Blossoms in the Dust—reissueFeb.
 Key to the City—Gable-YoungFeb.
 Conspirator—Robt. Taylor-Eliz. TaylorMar.
 Nancy Goes to Rio—Sothorn-PowellMar.
 Black Hand—Gene KellyMar.
 The Yellow Cab Man—Skelton-DuranteApr.
 Side Street—Granger-O'DonnellApr.
 The Outriders—McCrea-Dahl-SullivanApr.
 Shadow on the Wall—Sothorn-Scott
 (formerly "Death in a Doll's House").....not set

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

4844 Riders of the Dusk—Whip Wilson (57 m.)...Nov. 13
 4819 Masterminds—Bowery BoysNov. 27
 4866 Lawless Code—Jimmy Wakely (58 m.)....Dec. 4
 4807 Bomba on Panther Island—Johnny Sheffield...Dec. 18
 4845 Range Land—Whip Wilson (56 m.).....Dec. 25
 (End of 1948-49 Season)

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Allied Artists Features

(1560 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

(Distribution through Monogram)

14 Stampede—Cameron-StormAug. 28
 16 There's a Girl in My Heart—Knox-Bowman-Jean...Jan.

Beginning of 1949-50 Season

4951	Six-Gun Mesa—J. M. Brown (57 m.)	Jan. 8
4901	Blue Grass of Kentucky—Williams-Nigh	Jan. 22
4911	Joe Palooka Meets Humphrey—Kirkwood	Jan. 29
4913	Blonde Dynamite—Bowery Boys (formerly "Bowery Boys in London")	Feb. 12
4946	Fence Riders—Whip Wilson	Feb. 19
4902	Young Daniel Boone—Bruce-Miller	Feb. 25
4952	Roaring Trails—J. M. Brown	Mar. 5
4907	Killer Shark—Roddy McDowall	Mar. 19
4922	Square Dance Katy—Jimmy Davis	Mar. 25
4941	Bad Men of Indian Mesa—Whip Wilson	Apr. 9
4917	Henry Does It Again—Walburn	Apr. 16
4909	Jiggs & Maggie Out West—Yule-Riano	Apr. 23

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

4905	Chicago Deadline—Ladd-Reed-Havoc	Nov. 11
4906	Red, Hot and Blue—Hutton-Mature	Nov. 25
4907	Holiday Inn—reissue	Dec. 2
4908	The Lady Eve—reissue	Dec. 2
4909	The Great Lover—Bob Hope	Dec. 28
4910	File on Thelma Jordan—Stanwyck-Corey	Jan.
4911	Captain China—Russell-Payne-Russell	Feb.
4912	Dear Wife—Caulfield-Holden	Feb.
4913	So Proudly We Hail—reissue	Mar.
4914	Wake Island—reissue	Mar.
4915	Paid in Full—Scott-Cummings-Lynn	Mar.
4916	Eagle & the Hawk—Payne-Fleming-O'Keefe	Apr.
4917	Riding High—Crosby-Gray-Gleason	Apr.

Prestige Pictures Features

(445 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

(Distribution through Universal-International)
(No national release dates)

Girl in the Painting—Mai Zetterling	.....
Daybreak—Todd-Portman	.....

RKO Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

067	She Wore a Yellow Ribbon—Wayne-Dru	.....
093	Ichabod & Mr. Toad—Disney	.....
005	Make Mine Laughs—Ray Bolger	.....
062	Gunga Din—reissue	.....
063	The Lost Patrol—reissue	.....
008	I Married a Communist—Day-Ryan	.....
011	Arctic Fury—Documentary	.....
009	They Live By Night—O'Donnell-Granger	.....
010	Strange Bargain—Scott-Lynn	.....
012	Masked Raiders—Tim Holt (60 m.)	.....
068	Bride for Sale—Colbert-Brent-Young	.....
014	A Dangerous Profession—Raft-Raines-O'Brien	.....
013	Holiday Affair—Mitchum-Leigh	.....
015	The Threat—O'Shea-McGraw-Gray	.....
016	Riders of the Range—Tim Holt (61 m.)	.....
052	My Foolish Heart—Hayward-Andrews	.....
	Cinderella—Disney	.....

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

4901	The Kid from Cleveland—Brent-Bari	Sept. 5
4902	The Fighting Kentuckian—Wayne-Ralston	Oct. 5
4961	Powder River Rustlers—Allan Lane (61m.)	Nov. 25
4904	The Blonde Bandit—Rockwell-Patrick	Dec. 22
4971	Pioneer Marshal—Monte Hale (60 m.)	Dec. 24
4941	Bells of Coronado—Roy Rogers (67 m.)	Jan. 8
	The Savage Horde—Elliott-Booth	Jan. 15
	Unmasked—Rockwell-Fuller	Jan. 30
4905	Sands of Iwo Jima—Payne-Agar	not set

Selznick Rel. Org. Features

(400 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.)

The Fallen Idol—British cast	.....Nov.
The Third Man—Welles-Valli-Cotten	.....Feb.

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

926	Everybody Does It—Douglas-Darnell	Nov.
927	Oh, You Beautiful Doll—Haver-Stevens	Nov.
931	Pinky—Crain-Lundigan	Nov.
930	Fighting Man of the Plains—Scott	Dec.
929	Prince of Foxes—Power-Welles-Hendrix	Dec.

(End of 1949 Season)

Beginning of 1950 Season

001	Dancing in the Dark—Powell-Drake	Jan.
002	Whirlpool—Tierney-Conte-Ferrer	Jan.
049	Stormy Weather—reissue	Jan.
003	When Willie Comes Marching Home—Dailey	Feb.
004	Twelve O'Clock High—Gregory Peck	Feb.
005	Dakota Lil—Montgomery Windsor	Feb.
006	Mother Didn't Tell Me—McGuire-Lundigan	Mar.
007	Three Came Home—Colbert-Knowles	Mar.

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

Satan's Cradle—Renaldo-Carillo (60 m.)	Oct. 7
The Big Wheel—Rooney-Romay-Mitchell	Nov. 5
A Kiss for Corliss—Temple-Niven	Nov. 25
Mrs. Mike—Powell-Keyes	Dec. 17
Deadly is the Female—Dall-Cummins	Jan.
Davy Crockett, Indian Scout—Montgomery-Drew	Jan.
Escape If You Can—Henreid-Mcleod	not set
D.O.A.—Edmund O'Brien	not set
Johnny Holliday—William Bendix	not set

Universal-International Features

(445 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

901	Free for All—Cummings-Blyth	Nov.
902	Story of Molly X—Havoc-Hart-Russell	Nov.
903	Bagdad—O'Hara-Price	Nov.
904	Undertow—Brady-Russell-Hart	Dec.
906	Woman in Hiding—Lupino-Duff	Jan.
907	The Rugged O'Riordans—British cast	Jan.
908	South Sea Sinner—Carey-Winters	Jan.
909	Borderline—MacMurray-Trevor	Feb.
910	Francis—Donald O'Connor	Feb.
	Buccaneer's Girl—DeCarlo-Friend	Mar.
	The Kid from Texas—Murphy-Storm	Mar.
	Outside the Wall—Maxwell-Basehart	Mar.
	Adam and Evelyn—British cast	not set
905	Tight Little Island—British cast	not set

Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

907	Story of Sea Biscuit—Temple-Fitzgerald	Nov. 12
908	Always Leave Them Laughing—Berle-Mayo	Nov. 26
909	A Farewell to Arms—reissue	Dec. 10
910	The Hatchet Man—reissue	Dec. 10
911	The Lady Takes a Sailor—Wyman-Morgan	Dec. 24
912	The Inspector-General—Danny Kaye	Dec. 31
913	The Hasty Heart—Reagan-Neal-Todd	Jan. 14
	Backfire—Mayo-MacRae-O'Brien	Feb. 11
905	Chain Lightning—Bogart-Parker	not set

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

2803	Hell Drivers—Sports (9½ m.)	Nov. 24
2604	Hollywood Sweepstakes— Favorite (reissue) (8 m.)	Dec. 1
2854	Disc Jockeys USA— Screen Snapshots (10 m.)	Dec. 15
2901	Yukon Canada—Novelty (10 m.)	Dec. 22
2804	Racing Headliners—Sports	Dec. 22
2552	Candid Microphone No. 2 (11 m.)	Dec. 29
2605	Poor Elmer—Favorite (reissue) (8 m.)	Dec. 29
2502	Punchy De Leon—Jolly Frolics	Jan. 12
2750	The Sound Man—Industry short (10 m.)	Jan. 19
2606	Ye Olde Swap Shoppe— Favorite (reissue) (8 m.)	Jan. 19
2652	Blue Angel—Cavalcade of B'way	Jan. 26
2855	The Great Showman—Screen Snapshots	Jan. 26

Columbia—Two Reels

2403	Dunked in the Deep—Stooges (17 m.)	Nov. 3
2422	Wha' Happen?—Vera Vague (16½ m.)	Nov. 10
2412	Let Down Your Aerial— Vernon-Quillan (17 m.)	Nov. 17
2423	French Fried Frolic— Brown-Ryan (16½ m.)	Dec. 8
2433	Love in Gloom— Youngman (reissue) (19 m.)	Dec. 15
2120	Sir Galahad—Scrial (15 episodes)	Dec. 22
2404	Punchy Cowpunchers—Stooges (17 m.)	Jan. 5
2413	His Baiting Beauty— Harry Von Zell (18 m.)	Jan. 12

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

T-113 In Old Amsterdam—Traveltalk (9 m.)	Nov. 12
W-135 Out-Foxed—Cartoon (8 m.)	Nov. 15
S-152 How Come?—Pete Smith	Nov. 19
W-161 The Lonesome Mouse— Cartoon (reissue) (8 m.)	Nov. 26
S-153 We Can Dream, Can't We?— Pete Smith (9 m.)	Dec. 3
W-136 Tennis Chumps—Cartoon (7 m.)	Dec. 10
T-114 A Wee Bit of Scotland— Traveltalk (10 m.)	Dec. 17
W-137 Counterfeit Cat—Cartoon (7 m.)	Dec. 24
S-154 Sports Oddities—Pete Smith (8 m.)	Dec. 31
W-138 Little Quacker—Cartoon (7 m.)	Jan. 7
W-139 Saturday Evening Puss—Cartoon (7 m.)	Jan. 14
S-155 Pest Control—Pete Smith (8 m.)	Jan. 14
S-156 Crashing the Movies—Pete Smith (8 m.)	Jan. 28

Paramount—One Reel

X9-2 The Big Drip—Screen Song (8 m.)	Nov. 25
Z9-2 Suddenly It's Spring—Champion (10 m.)	Dec. 2
R9-2 The Husky Parade—Spotlight (10 m.)	Dec. 9
X9-3 Snow Foolin'—Screen Song (8 m.)	Dec. 16
B9-2 The Fly's Last Flight—Popeye (7 m.)	Dec. 23
K9-2 The Country Doctor—Pacemaker (11 m.)	Dec. 30
P9-3 Land of the Lost Jewels—Noveltoon (10 m.)	Jan. 6
X9-4 Blue Hawaii—Screen Song (7 m.)	Jan. 13
R9-3 Farther Down East—Spotlight (10 m.)	Jan. 20
B9-3 How Green Is My Spinach—Popeye (7 m.)	Jan. 27
Z9-3 Breezy Little Bears—Champion (11 m.)	Feb. 3
K9-3 The Rhumba Seat—Pacemaker	Feb. 10
X9-5 Detouring Thru Maine—Screen Song	Feb. 17
R9-5 Wild Goose Chase—Spotlight	Feb. 24
P9-4 Quack-a-doodle-do—Noveltoon (7 m.)	Mar. 3
Z9-4 Cilly Goose—Champion (10 m.)	Mar. 10
B9-4 Gym Jam—Popeye	Mar. 17
X9-5 Shortenin' Bread—Screen Song	Mar. 24
P9-5 Teacher's Pest—Noveltoon	Mar. 31

RKO—One Reel

04303 Diamond Showcase—Sportscope (m.)	Dec. 2
04204 Square Dance Tonight— Screenliner (9 m.)	Dec. 2
04105 Slide, Donald, Slide—Disney (7 m.)	Dec. 9
04107 Toy Tinkers—Disney (7 m.)	Dec. 16
04205 I'm Going to be a Poppa— Screenliner (9 m.)	Dec. 23
04106 Pluto's Heart Throb—Disney (7 m.)	Dec. 30
04702 Farmyard Symphony— Disney (reissue) (7 m.)	Dec. 30
04108 Lion Around—Disney (7 m.)	Jan. 20
04109 Pluto & the Gopher—Disney (7 m.)	Jan. 20
04703 How to Ride a Horse— Disney (reissue) (7 m.)	Feb. 24
04112 The Brave Engineer—Disney	Apr. 7

RKO—Two Reels

03502 Two for the Money— Ed. Kennedy (reissue) (17 m.)	Nov. 4
03603 Snug in the Jug— Clark & McCullough (reissue) (20 m.)	Nov. 18
03503 A Trailer Tragedy— Ed. Kennedy (reissue) (17 m.)	Dec. 2
03104 Kilroy Returns—This Is America (18 m.)	Dec. 9
03901 Football Headliners of 1949— Special (18 m.)	Dec. 9
03702 Shocking Affair—Leon Errol (17 m.)	Dec. 23
03403 Groan & Grunt—Comedy Special (17 m.)	Jan. 20
03801 Basketball Headliners of 1950 (17 m.)	Apr. 21

Republic—Two Reels

4982 Radar Patrol vs Spy King (12 ep.)	Dec. 3
4981 James Brothers of Missouri—Serial (12 ep.)	Jan.

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

9519 Paint Pot Symphony—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Dec.
9256 Jewel of the Baltic—Adventure (8 m.)	Dec.
9520 Stop, Look & Listen (Mighty Mouse)— Terrytoon (7 min.)	Dec.
9203 Midwest Metropolis—Adventure (11 m.)	Dec.

(End of 1949 Season)

Beginning of 1950 Season

5001 Comic Book Land—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Jan.
3001 Skiing is Believing—Sports	Jan.

5021 Mississippi Swing—Terry. (reissue) (7 m.)	Jan.
7001 Lawrence Welk & His Champagne Music— Melody	Jan.
5002 The Fox Hunt (Talk. Magpies)—Terry. (7 m.)	Feb.
3002 From Jib to Topsail—Sports	Feb.
5022 What Happens at Night—Terry. (reissue) (7 m.)	Feb.
3051 Frolic in Sports—Sports	Mar.
5003 Better Late Than Never (Victor the Volunteer)—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Mar.
7002 Red Ingle & His Gang—Melody	Mar.
5004 Mighty Mouse in Anti-Cats—Terry. (7 m.)	Mar.

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

Vol. 15 No. 10—The Fight for Better Schools— March of Time (20 m.)	Oct.
Vol. 15 No. 11—MacArthur's Japan— March of Time (18 m.)	Nov.
Vol. 15 No. 12—A Chance to Live— March of Time (18 m.)	Dec.

United Artists—One Reel

Bolero—Cartune (7½ m.)	June
Treasured Ballads—Songs of America (10 m.)	July 22
Melodic Spirituals—Songs of America (9 m.)	Aug. 19
Visions and Voices—Songs of America (9 m.)	Sept. 9
Melodic Sketches—Songs of America (9 m.)	Oct. 7
Symphonic Shades—Songs of America (8 m.)	Nov. 4
Melodies Reborn—Songs of America (10 m.)	Dec. 2

Universal—One Reel

5322 Kittens Mittens—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	Dec. 5
5342 Breaking the Tape— Variety Views (9 m.)	Dec. 12
5382 Songs of the Range— Sing & Be Happy (10 m.)	Dec. 26
5323 Jolly Little Elves—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	Jan. 2
5324 Under the Spreading Blacksmith's Shop— Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	Jan. 30
5343 Future Skippers—Variety Views (9 m.)	Jan. 30
5325 Barber of Seville—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	Feb. 13
5383 Dream Dust—Sing & Be Happy (10 m.)	Feb. 20
5326 Mother Goose on the Loose— Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	Mar. 6
5344 Progress Island—Variety Views (9 m.)	Mar. 13
5384 Sing Your Thanks— Sing & Be Happy (10 m.)	Apr. 3

Universal—Two Reels

5302 Lionel Hampton & Orch.— Musical (15 m.)	Dec. 7
5352 South of Santa Fe— Musical Western (29 m.)	Dec. 22
5303 Freddie Slack & Orch.—Musical (15 m.)	Jan. 4
5202 The Tiny Terrors Make Trouble—Special	Jan. 18
5304 Ethel Smith & the Henry King Orch.— Musical (15 m.)	Feb. 1
5353 The Fargo Phantom— Musical Western (24 m.)	Feb. 9
5354 Gold Strike—Musical Western	Mar. 30

Vitaphone—One Reel

6303 The Hep Cat— B.R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)	Nov. 12
6502 King of the Rockies—Sports Parade (10 m.)	Nov. 19
6402 So You Want to Be an Actor— Joe McDoakes (10 m.)	Dec. 3
6503 Happy Holidays—Sports Parade (10 m.)	Dec. 10
6701 Bear Feat—Merrie Melody (7 m.)	Dec. 10
6602 A-Speed on the Deep—Novelty (10 m.)	Dec. 24
6304 Toy Trouble— B.R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)	Dec. 31
6702 A Ham in a Role—Merrie Melody (7 m.)	Dec. 31
6703 Home, Tweet Home—Merrie Melody (7 m.)	Jan. 14
6803 40 Boys and a Song— Melody Master (reissue) (10 m.)	Jan. 14
6504 Let's Go Boating—Sports Parade (10 m.)	Jan. 21
6305 My Favorite Duck— B.R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)	Jan. 28
6704 Boobs in the Woods—Merrie Mel. (7 m.)	Jan. 28

Vitaphone—Two Reels

6002 Jungle Terror—Special (20 m.)	Nov. 5
6102 Calling All Girls—Featurette (20 m.)	Nov. 26
6003 Snow Carnival—Special (20 m.)	Dec. 17
6103 The Grass is Always Greener— Featurette (20 m.)	Jan. 7

**NEWSWEEKLY
NEW YORK****RELEASE DATES****Warner Pathe News**

40 Mon. (E)	Jan. 2
41 Wed. (O)	Jan. 4
42 Mon. (E)	Jan. 9
43 Wed. (O)	Jan. 16
44 Mon. (E)	Jan. 16
45 Wed. (O)	Jan. 18
46 Mon. (E)	Jan. 23
47 Wed. (O)	Jan. 25
48 Mon. (E)	Jan. 30
49 Wed. (O)	Feb. 1
50 Mon. (E)	Feb. 6
51 Wed. (O)	Feb. 8
52 Mon. (E)	Feb. 13
53 Wed. (O)	Feb. 15
54 Mon. (E)	Feb. 20

Paramount News

37 Sunday (O)	Jan. 1
38 Thurs. (E)	Jan. 5
39 Sunday (O)	Jan. 8
40 Thurs. (E)	Jan. 12
41 Sunday (O)	Jan. 15
42 Thurs. (E)	Jan. 19
43 Sunday (O)	Jan. 22
44 Thurs. (E)	Jan. 26
45 Sunday (O)	Jan. 29
46 Thurs. (E)	Feb. 2
47 Sunday (O)	Feb. 5
48 Thurs. (E)	Feb. 9
49 Sunday (O)	Feb. 12
50 Thurs. (E)	Feb. 16
51 Sunday (O)	Feb. 19

Fox Movietone

104 Tues. (E)	Dec. 27
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(End of 1949 Season)

**Beginning of
1950 Season**

1 Friday (O)	Dec. 30
2 Tues. (E)	Jan. 3
3 Friday (O)	Jan. 6
4 Tues. (E)	Jan. 10
5 Friday (O)	Jan. 13
6 Tues. (E)	Jan. 17
7 Friday (O)	Jan. 20
8 Tues. (E)	Jan. 24
9 Friday (O)	Jan. 27
10 Tues. (E)	Jan. 31
11 Friday (O)	Feb. 3
12 Tues. (E)	Feb. 7
13 Friday (O)	Feb. 10
14 Tues. (E)	Feb. 14
15 Friday (O)	Feb. 17

Universal

313 Tues. (O)	Jan. 3
314 Thurs. (E)	Jan. 5
315 Tues. (O)	Jan. 10
316 Thurs. (E)	Jan. 12
317 Tues. (O)	Jan. 17
318 Thurs. (E)	Jan. 19
319 Tues. (O)	Jan. 24
320 Thurs. (E)	Jan. 26
321 Tues. (O)	Jan. 31
322 Thurs. (E)	Feb. 2
323 Tues. (O)	Feb. 7
324 Thurs. (E)	Feb. 9
325 Tues. (O)	Feb. 14
326 Thurs. (E)	Feb. 16

News of the Day

235 Mon. (O)	Jan. 2
236 Wed. (E)	Jan. 4
237 Mon. (O)	Jan. 9
238 Wed. (E)	Jan. 11
239 Mon. (O)	Jan. 16
240 Wed. (E)	Jan. 18
241 Mon. (O)	Jan. 23
242 Wed. (E)	Jan. 25
243 Mon. (O)	Jan. 30
244 Wed. (E)	Feb. 1
245 Mon. (O)	Feb. 6
246 Wed. (E)	Feb. 8
247 Mon. (O)	Feb. 13
248 Wed. (E)	Feb. 15
249 Mon. (O)	Feb. 20

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A GUIDE TO THEATRE BUDGET CONTROL

From time to time this paper receives from exhibitors requests for a breakdown of theatre operating costs to guide them in setting up a form of budget control that will enable them to operate their theatres profitably.

Because of the fact that no two theatre operations are identical, any cost schedule of the different phases of theatre operation, or a percentage breakdown of the different items of expense that must come out of each box-office dollar, exclusive of admission taxes, cannot be accepted as a recognized standard. In some instances, for example, the rent and depreciation may be top-heavy, or salaries may be unusually high. It follows, therefore, that any theatre cost schedule devised is at best theoretical.

From information obtained from several experienced theatremen, this paper, taking a consensus of their opinions, has formulated the following cost schedule, which is published, not as a perfect example of theatre budgeting, but as a guide to which the exhibitor should adhere as close as possible to keep the different phases of his operation in balance:

Film Rental including shorts	25%
Advertising	5%
Payroll	21%
Administration	5%
Rent	15%
Heat, Light and Power	4%
Taxes and Insurance	5%
Depreciation	3%
Other expenses	7%
Profit	10%

A more detailed explanation of what the above items include is as follows:

Film rental. It is the unanimous opinion of the theatremen from whom this information was obtained that film rental should not exceed twenty-five per cent of the gross receipts. There are, they agree, some theatres that can afford to pay forty to fifty per cent for film and still be left with a handsome profit because of their ability to garner huge grosses. On the other hand, some theatres cannot exist at even twenty per cent for film rental. The twenty-five per cent figure covers the average theatre operation, and the exhibitor whose film bill runs beyond that figure endangers his profit possibilities.

Advertising. This item of expense includes newspapers, theatre fronts, trailers, accessories, billboards, heralds, valances, mailing lists, programs, and any other items chargeable to publicity and exploitation.

Payroll. This item includes salaries to the manager, assistant manager, ushers, doormen, watchmen, cashiers, porters, maids, and any one else employed at the theatre. If, for example, you, as the exhibitor, perform the duties of the manager, you should set yourself down for a commensurate salary. Wages in these times being rather high, it may be difficult for an exhibitor to hold this expense to twenty-one per cent of the gross receipts. But if it goes beyond that figure economies must be made on other items of expense in order to meet the condition.

Administration. This item includes general office expenses, traveling, booking and buying costs, telephone and telegraph, bookkeeping, and all other expenses that are factors in the operation of an office. The percentage cost of administration expenses is, however, flexible, depending on the size of an exhibitor's operation. If, for example, he owns only one theatre and does his own booking and buying, his administration expenses can be as low as three per cent, or less, of the gross receipts. On the other hand, a circuit operation, which has home office overhead, such as office rent, film buyers and bookers, secretarial help, stationery, light, telephone and telegraph, traveling, etc., may require as much as seven per cent of the gross receipts for administration expenses, which would include also officers' salaries

if the yearly gross receipts ran into many hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Rent. The rent figure should not exceed fifteen per cent of the gross receipts. If you own the property, the rent figure should include interest on the mortgage, if any, all taxes, realty and otherwise, that are assessed against the property, and depreciation of the building.

Heat, Light and Power. This includes fuel oil or coal, and electric power required to operate the theatre such as booth, lights, marquee, motors and cooling system.

Taxes and Insurance. This item of expense includes social security and unemployment taxes, theatre license, and different insurances such as public liability, fire, workmen's compensation, fidelity bonds, burglary, etc.

Depreciation. This item covers all equipment such as projectors, seats, carpets, marquee, screen, cleaning equipment and including decorations.

Other expenses. This includes miscellaneous repairs; painting; sound service; film delivery; carbons; light bulbs; organization dues; equipment maintenance; legal fees; charity contributions; tickets; uniforms; cleaning supplies, etc.

Although ten per cent is shown as a fair profit in the cost schedule, it may be more than fair in some cases and insufficient in others, as will be shown later on in this article from comments made by Mr. Leo F. Wollcott, chairman of the board of Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Iowa-Nebraska, whose organization has adopted a weekly theatre expense form to help its members determine their actual costs of operations so that they may pay for film no more than they can afford. This expense form, when completed, makes it a simple matter to arrive at a percentage schedule of costs. If the exhibitor wants to determine whether or not he is keeping the different phases of his operation in proper balance. Its real value, however, lies in the fact that it helps an exhibitor to know exactly what his overhead costs are each week, thus enabling him to set a limit on how much he can pay for film so that he will be left with a profit.

Mr. Wollcott first devised his weekly expense form in 1944, and it was published in this paper in the November 25 issue of that year. He has been good enough to send us a copy of the latest printing of this form which, though slightly modified, is basically the same as the original. Because of the great interest shown in this form when we first reproduced it, HARRISON'S REPORTS is reproducing it again in the belief that it will be of great benefit to our subscribers, especially those who operate small theatres:

THEATRE WEEKLY OVERHEAD EXPENSES			
DATE PREPARED.....	EXCHANGE AREA.....	CITY & STATE.....	
PERIOD COVERED.....	THEATRE.....		AVERAGE PER WEEK
Shorts and News			\$.....
Salaries			
Social Security and F. O. A. B.			
Newspaper Advertising			
Other Advertising			
Light and Power			
Heating and Cooling			
Supplies			
Film Transportation			
Telephone and Telegraph			
Repairs, Painting, Etc.			
Sound Service			
Travel			
Contributions			
Rent			
Insurance			
Taxes (excluding income taxes)			
Depreciation			
Other Expenses			
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$.....
Less Sub-Tenant & Misc.			\$.....
NET EXPENSES			\$.....
COST PER UNIT (Divide NET EXPENSES by 10)			\$.....

(Sunday 3 tenths; Saturday 2 tenths; each other day 1 tenth)

(Continued on back page)

"Riding High" with Bing Crosby, Charles Bickford and Coleen Gray

(Paramount, April; time, 112 min.)

Very good! It is a remake of "Broadway Bill," the horse racing story, which Frank Capra produced and directed for Columbia in 1934. This version, also produced and directed by Mr. Capra, is as good and even better than the original, for the leading role is a "natural" for Bing Crosby, whose easy-going style and nonchalant glibness give the picture much of its charm. The story, which is pretty much the same as the original, is a delightful mixture of comedy, romance and human interest, with the race sequence at the finish, where the horse wins by forcing the reins out of the hands of a crooked jockey who was trying to hold him back, extremely thrilling. A highly dramatic and pathetic sequence is at the end of the race, when the roaring crowd comes to a sudden hush as the horse, after crossing the finish line, drops dead from over-exertion. The different race track characters played by Raymond Walburn, William Demarest, James Gleason, Percy Kilbride and Oliver Hardy are colorful and comical. Coleen Gray, as the girl who loves Crosby, is charming. Worked into the proceedings to good effect are several catchy songs, with one, "Bake a Sunshine Cake," destined to become a hit:—

Engaged to Frances Gifford, Crosby, a lover of race horses, hates the paperbox business he had been forced into by Charles Bickford, his wealthy prospective father-in-law. He rebels against Bickford's iron rule and, despite Frances' protests, forsakes the business to train "Broadway Bill," a horse he owned, for the Derby. Coleen Gray, Frances' younger sister, in love with Crosby, applauds his stand and follows him to the racetrack to give him and Clarence Muse, his groom, a hand with the horse. Because of his lack of funds, Crosby finds himself in many difficulties trying to meet feed bills and the entry fee, but he manages to get by through the conniving of several track pals, plus the little financial help given him by Coleen. A leaky roof in the old stable causes the horse to become seriously ill, but Crosby seemingly gets him back into shape in time for the race. The jockey, in league with crooked gamblers, tries to hold "Broadway Bill" back, but the plucky horse breaks his grip and comes in the winner. Crosby's joy turns to sorrow when the horse falls dead. Broken-hearted, he goes away, but a few months later, with two new horses in tow, he returns to Bickford's house to claim, not Frances, but Coleen. Bickford, fed up with his business enterprises and his fawning family, joins them to live a carefree life.

Robert Riskin wrote the screen play from the story by Mark Hellinger. The cast includes Margaret Hamilton, Douglas Dumbrille, Ward Bond, Frankie Darro and others. Unobjectionable morally.

"Borderline" with Fred MacMurray, Claire Trevor and Raymond Burr

(Univ.-Int'l, January; time, 88 min.)

Just fair. It is a melodrama centering around a police-woman and a Federal narcotics agent who, separately assigned to track down a dope smuggling ring, believe each other to be members of the ring. The story idea is good, and if played as a straight comedy, it might have been highly entertaining, but it tries to be both serious and comical and fails to register either way. It does have several exciting moments and provokes some laughter in spots, but on the whole it is only mildly interesting, for many of the situations are far-fetched and one guesses in advance just how the plot will develop. The direction and acting are no more than adequate:—

Claire Trevor, a Los Angeles policewoman, is deputized as a U. S. Narcotics agent to help Raymond Burr, head of a dope ring, who had a weakness for blondes. She locates Burr in Mexico, where she poses as a dancer in a cheap cafe and manages to get into his room to search for evidence. As Burr makes advances to her, Fred MacMurray bursts in. Actually a narcotics agent himself, but posing as a member of a rival gang, MacMurray, at gunpoint, forces Burr to reveal the whereabouts of his next shipment, and takes

Claire as hostage in the assumption that she is Burr's "moll." MacMurray brings her to a warehouse, where Roy Roberts, head of the rival gang, orders them to pose as man and wife in a scheme to smuggle a large quantity of heroin across the border into the United States. Claire agrees for a "price." The auto trip to the border takes a few days, during which Burr, in hot pursuit, overtakes them several times, only to be shaken off because of their clever ruses. Meanwhile neither suspects that the other is an agent, and each secretly gathers evidence to convict the other. A strong affection grows between them, but they fight it off lest it interfere with the performance of their duty. Arriving at the border, each ruefully attempts to have the other arrested, only to be shocked when they learn that they are both agents. They maintain the ruse, however, and upon reaching Los Angeles make arrangements to deliver the dope. This leads to a bang-up finale, in which the police round up the smugglers while Claire and MacMurray land in each other's arms.

It was produced by Milton H. Bren and directed by William A. Seiter from a story and screen play by Devery Freeman.

Adult fare.

"The Sundowners" with Robert Preston, Robert Sterling and Chill Wills

(Eagle-Lion, no rel. date set; time, 83 min.)

A well-made Technicolor Western, expertly directed and acted, but it is unpleasant, for it pits brother against brother. Moreover, it seems best suited for the adult fans because of the brutality and ruthlessness depicted in its story of feuding between rival cattlemen. Additionally, its glorification of one of the brothers, an unprincipled, vicious killer, coupled with the fact that he forces his unwanted attentions on a married woman, at times in front of her husband, a weakling, makes it unsuitable for children and youths. The story generates an undercurrent of tension throughout, and on occasion the action is explosive, but for the most part it is given more to talk than to movement, making it difficult for one to follow the plot unless he pays close attention to the dialogue. The film marks the screen debut of John Barrymore, Jr., who does well enough as a young cowpoke who idolizes the daring of his bad eldest brother, played most effectively by Robert Preston. Chill Wills, as an amiable neighboring rancher, turns in his usual good performance:—

Robert Sterling and Barrymore, his younger brother, owners of a large Texas ranch, discover their foreman murdered in the latest of a series of rustling raids by several small ranchers who were jealous of the brothers' large cattle herds. Unable to get any action from the sheriff (Don Haggerty), who was secretly in league with the ranchers, Sterling agrees to allow Robert Preston, a swaggering gunman, to retaliate against the rustlers in his behalf. In a series of vicious assaults, Preston soon evens the score, recovering a large portion of the stolen herds and taking a great share of the loot himself. In the process, he ruthlessly murders one of the small ranchers, the sheriff, and a local geologist, whose unhappy wife (Cathy Downs) Preston openly pursued, even though he knew that she was in love with Sterling. Meanwhile young Barrymore, admiring Preston's daring and flattered by his attentions, becomes greatly attached to him. John Littel, the dead sheriff's father, vows to kill Preston on sight for the murder of his son. By this time it comes out that Preston is really a brother of Sterling and Barrymore. Aware that the valley had become inflamed over Preston's killings and pillaging, Sterling grows remorseful over the chain of events he had started and orders Preston away from the ranch. Preston departs, but, apparently drawn by his feelings for Cathy, he returns within several weeks and threatens to shoot down both his brothers when they give him the choice of leaving or going to jail. Chill Wills, aware that Preston was not fooling, kills him in time to save Sterling and Barrymore from harm.

The story and screen play were written and produced by Alan LeMay, and directed by George Templeton.

Adult fare.

"Never Fear" with Sally Forrest and Keith Brasselle

(Eagle-Lion, January; time, 81 min.)

A sombre but appealing drama, revolving around a pretty young dancer who is stricken with polio. Given a semi-documentary treatment, the sensitively written story deals with the girl's bitter reaction to her plight, her giving up her romance with her dance partner after resigning herself to life as a cripple, and her successful fight to overcome her affliction when the examples set by other polio victims give her new courage. Some of the situations are deeply touching. The direction of Ida Lupino, her first such undertaking, is understanding, drawing from the unknown but capable cast sincere and effective portrayals. Of considerable interest are the scenes depicting the therapeutic measures employed to combat the disease. A fascinating sequence is the one in which the patients, in wheelchairs, participate in a square dance. The backgrounds and setting are appropriate and realistic:—

Sally Forrest and Keefe Brasselle, very much in love, bubble with happiness after their successful debut as a dance team in a swank Los Angeles night-club. They plan to marry, but tragedy strikes when Sally collapses—a victim of polio. Taken to a sanitarium, she becomes resentful and bitter over her plight. She becomes convinced that she will never recover and shows little enthusiasm for the corrective exercises and treatment that could help her. Keefe encourages her and, despite her condition, asks her to marry him, but she urges him to forget her and continue his dancing career. He remonstrates with her, but this only leads to harsh words between them and a parting of the ways. In his loneliness, Keefe turns his attentions to another girl, but he cannot forget Sally. Meanwhile Sally becomes friendly with Hugh O'Brian, another patient who, understanding her emotional collapse, urges her not to give up the fight to walk. O'Brian's words of encouragement, coupled with the fact that she learns that another woman patient is happily married, even though wed after stricken with polio, gives Sally new hope and strengthens her resolve to be cured. She pursues her therapy with determination, and in slow but sure stages discards her wheel chair and then her braces as she learns to walk with canes. On the day she is discharged from the hospital to start a new life, her happiness is complete when she finds Keefe waiting for her.

Ida Lupino and Collier Young wrote the original screen play. Mr. Young produced it.

Its subject matter is best suited for adults.

"Davy Crockett, Indian Scout" with George Montgomery and Ellen Drew

(United Artists, January; time, 71 min.)

A good Indians-versus-U. S. Cavalry pioneer melodrama, suitable for the top half of a double bill wherever action pictures are favored. The story, which has an Indian princess and a renegade white spying on the movements of wagon trains, is not exceptional, but this should not concern the dyed-in-the-wool action fans, for the proceedings are packed with excitement from start to finish, where the Indians launch a vicious attack against a wagon train after trapping its military escort. The manner in which the hero rescues the soldiers and turns the tide against the redskins is imaginative fancy, but it makes for a smash finale that will keep the youngsters on the edge of their seats.

The story, which unfolds through a series of flashbacks during a military court inquiry, has as its principal characters George Montgomery, as an Indian scout, a cousin of the famous Davy Crockett; Philip Reed, as his Indian friend and assistant; and Ellen Drew, as an Indian princess who looked like a white woman. With the court investigating charges that Reed is in reality an Indian spy responsible for the ambush of a wagon train, the following story comes out: Montgomery had been engaged to guide a west-bound wagon train, which had come under the protection of the U. S. Cavalry as it passed through hostile Indian country. Ellen, posing as a St. Louis schoolteacher, and Paul Guilfoyle, posing as her deaf mute driver, had joined the wagon train after barely escaping an Indian attack. An unsuccessful redskin ambush had convinced Montgomery and Reed that

spies were in their midst, and they had turned out to be Ellen and Guilfoyle. Montgomery had apprehended Guilfoyle, but Ellen has escaped to the camp of her father (Robert Barrat), a warring chief, and had given him information about the wagon train's proposed route. Reed had followed her to the camp, and had been captured and tortured. Having fallen in love with Reed, Ellen had come to the realization that her father was a ruthless man, and she had set Reed free, accompanying him back to the wagon train to warn Montgomery to change his course. Montgomery had taken her advice, but Ellen's father had out-manuevered him, giving him the impression that both Ellen and Reed had tricked him. He knew different, however, when both risked their lives to help him put the Indians to rout. Impressed by what they had heard, the court acquits Ellen and Reed. As Montgomery sets out for new adventures, Ellen and Reed plan to start an Indian school, dedicating themselves to fostering a better understanding between Indians and whites.

It is an Edward Small production, directed by Lew Landers from a screen play by Richard Schayer, based on a story by Fred Beebe. Grant Wytook and Bernard Small were associate producers.

Suitable for the family.

"The Nevadan" with Randolph Scott, Dorothy Malone and Forrest Tucker

(Columbia, February; time, 81 min.)

Although not extraordinary, this Western is a cut above the average melodrama of this type by reason of its Cinecolor photography and the marquee value of Randolph Scott. The story is the routine one about a U. S. Marshal posing as an outlaw to recover stolen gold from a bandit, with his plans complicated by the fact that other crooks, too, are after the loot. The action tends to drag in the early reels, despite several spurts of excitement, but there is a rousing gun battle and fist fight at the finish, during which the hero brings the culprits to justice. There is some romantic interest, but it is mild. All in all, the Western fans should find it satisfying:—

Randolph Scott, a U. S. Marshal, is assigned to recover \$250,000 in gold stolen and hidden by Forrest Tucker, an outlaw. He joins up with Tucker by convincing him that he, too, was wanted by the law. Arriving in the town of Twin Rocks, Scott learns that George Macready, a scheming rancher and politician, was plotting to get Tucker's map showing the location of the hidden gold. Dorothy Malone, Macready's daughter, whom Scott meets and likes, is unaware of her father's crooked activities. Macready kills one of his own henchmen and frames Tucker for the murder. His plan was to help Tucker escape from jail, get the map, then do away with him. Scott, sensing Macready's intentions, manages to set Tucker free before Macready and his henchmen arrive at the jail. Dorothy, now aware that Scott is a Marshal, supplies him with horses and mules to take him and Tucker to the gold's hiding place high in the mountains. Later, when she reveals to her father that Scott is a Marshal and that she had helped him, Macready slaps her and sets off in pursuit with two of his henchmen (Frank Faylen and Jeff Corey), cornering Scott and Tucker as they remove the gold. Scott then reveals his identity to Tucker and convinces him that their only hope for survival was to remain united. The two henchmen are killed in a furious exchange of shots, leaving only Macready to be overcome. He is killed when Dorothy makes an appearance and he unwittingly exposes himself to remonstrate with her. A fist fight then takes place between Scott and Tucker, with Scott emerging the victor. His assignment completed, Scott turns his attentions to Dorothy.

It was produced by Harry Joe Brown and directed by Gordon Douglas from a story and screen play by George W. George and George F. Slavins. The cast includes Charles Kemper, Tom Powers and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The Flying Saucer," a Film Classics release, is a weak program adventure melodrama with fair exploitation possibilities. Full review next week.

So that the exhibitors may better understand how to make proper use of this form, we repeat what Mr. Wollcott had to say in 1944:

"When you have gone back through your records far enough to get a clear and accurate estimate of the various items and have entered and totaled them all on the form, divide the total cost by 10. Then charge two-tenths off for Saturday, three-tenths against Sunday, and one-tenth against each of the other five days. Add your feature film rental to the number of tenths due any given picture change and you have the total cost of the operation, which deducted from the gross, gives you the net profit, if any. As an example, we will say that the overhead from the form totals \$300 per week, or \$30 per tenth. You pay \$40 for a picture which you run Sunday and Monday. Sunday and Monday takes up four-tenths or \$120, plus \$40 for the picture, which means you have to gross \$160 to break even. Anything over is profit, anything less, of course is loss."

Recently the writer asked Mr. Wollcott if he would care to add anything to his original remarks for the benefit of this paper's subscribers, and the following, in part, is his reply:

"We, too, have many requests for this form, and, I may add, copies of it are standard equipment which are given our new members because we firmly believe no exhibitor should attempt to operate a theatre without knowing his overhead expenses. This knowledge, a pencil and simple arithmetic can, in a few weeks, demonstrate conclusively what can and what cannot be done in any given theatre situation."

"The only suggestions I can offer at this moment, additional to the self-explaining overhead form are that, where a theatre has been in operation for some time to make this possible, the Federal Income Tax figures which are a mandatory part of the business today can be a help in arriving at the various items of expense on the form and, likewise, the form can be a help in determining the proper figures for income tax purposes."

"And, one more thing—Bank Night, cash nights and other forms of giveaways should be treated like a second feature, thus becoming chargeable to that particular day or date, and not spread over the entire week's operation, unless used all week."

Commenting on Theatre Cost Schedules, Mr. Wollcott states that it is a "tough proposition to set up a hard and fast schedule and make it stick because of the vast differences in theatres and their grosses, and a thousand and one factors." After pointing out that he made up a cost schedule some years back and came up with a figure of twelve per cent profit, Mr. Wollcott has this to say: "That 12% profit would probably look very big to the Interboro Circuit which operates 37 theatres in and around New York and recently published a breakdown of their box-office dollar, which came up with what they appeared to feel was a satisfactory profit of only 6%."

"Perhaps a big operation which has huge grosses can find satisfaction in a 6% or a 10% remaining profit, the same as they can make money and pay 40% or 50% for features—if their grosses are big enough."

"But the vast majority of the smaller theatres in the country—and that's the vast majority of the country's theatres—have weekly grosses that range from \$150, yes, I said \$150! to \$1,000. Thus it is no trick to figure that in today's 'consumer's index' the little fellow with the \$150 gross has got to have at least 33⅓% profit or he better start digging ditches or clerking in a grocery store. 6% of \$150 equals exactly \$9! The guy with the \$1,000 gross might feel reasonably secure at 10% profit, but at that, his film branch manager beats his 'take-home' results, with no investment."

"So it would seem that few breakdowns of the box-office dollar could fit all situations, unless, among those items usually designated as 'Salaries' or 'Administration' or 'Management and Booking' it could be found that the exhibitor is on the payroll and his salary compensates him for his time and effort, so that he can treat his theatre as an investment, in which case the 6%, 10% or 12% can probably be considered a good profit."

Mr. Wollcott closes his letter by stating that his main purpose in discussing the breakdown of the box-office dollar is to show how important it is for the average exhibitor, and his family, if they work in his theatre, to be on the payroll for substantial salaries.

Basically, an exhibitor is in business to make money, and,

unless he conducts his operation in an orderly, well-organized and systematic manner, the chances of success are against him. Business prudence requires the exhibitor to operate his theatre on a set budget and to analyze his overhead expenses periodically to make sure that he is keeping his costs within the budget figures. The exhibitor who spends blindly and who is without any set budget plan is groping in the dark and looking for profits that just "ain't" there.

NO TIME TO CUT ADMISSION PRICES

In the January 4 issue of *The Exhibitor*, Jay Emanuel, publisher of that trade paper, points out that, during the pre-holiday slump in theatre attendance, which began much earlier than usual, exhibitors in many parts of the country "started to experiment with price cuts, feeling that in part the answer to a slumping gross was a lesser admission."

"Cutting prices," said Mr. Emanuel, "is no one's monopoly. If a theatre slashes its tariff, it is quite simple for the other houses to follow. The difference now seems to be that no distributor is in a position to influence exhibitors because legal conditions make it impossible for a distributor to use his weight on a theatremanager to stick to a certain scale. It is because of this change that price-cutting becomes serious at this time. There are many in this industry who feel that charging a low admission will bring back increased business to theatres. However, along with other lines of industry, the motion picture industry is burdened by higher overhead and bigger costs. It has become virtually impossible for theatre owners to assume this bigger overhead without passing it on to their customers. Any price cutting does not bring with it a lesser overhead. . . ."

HARRISON'S REPORTS is in full agreement with what Mr. Emanuel had to say, and would like to add a further word of caution.

The industry is presently in the midst of an all-out drive for repeal or reduction of the twenty per cent Federal admission tax, and it is generally felt that, if the campaign is prosecuted forcefully, there is a good chance that Congress will either repeal the tax or cut it down in the near future. If this should come to pass, it is assumed that most theatres will reflect the elimination or reduction of the tax by a corresponding cut in their admission prices. Consequently, the exhibitor who lowers prices at this time may find himself in the position of having to lower them a second time, when and if the admission tax is either repealed or reduced.

HARRISON'S REPORTS suggests that the exhibitors hold in abeyance any ideas they may have about cutting admission prices until after Congress acts on the admission tax.

BROTHERHOOD WEEK

Once again the motion picture industry is being called upon to participate in and help dramatize Brotherhood Week, which has been set for the week of February 19-26, under the sponsorship of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

This year the industry's campaign will be conducted under the national chairmanship of Ted R. Gamble and, as in the previous campaigns, he will have the assistance of some twenty-seven national vice-chairmen representing all branches of the industry.

Six objectives have been set for this year's drive, including: (1) Ten memberships per theatre in the NCCJ at one dollar per membership; (2) special brotherhood observances in theatres; (3) wide promotion of this cause through special display material; (4) greatest use of special newsreel clips; (5) Brotherhood "chapters" formed with theatres the focal point; and (6) "Brotherhood Week" to be made a community event in the finest sense.

Every theatre in the country will be serviced with a campaign kit to be distributed by National Screen Service.

The central purpose of the NCCJ, which is a voluntary, civic organization of religiously motivated people, is to promote the idea of brotherhood and to make respect for the individual a part of the normal, natural day-to-day activities of the American people. It fights bigotry, discrimination and intolerance as a disease that seriously threatens the health of the nation, menaces its democratic institutions, and weighs oppressively upon large sections of the population. The organization has done wonderful work for many years in fostering goodwill among men, and its continuing efforts to affirm the principles of racial and religious equality are deserving of the fullest support of every exhibitor.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXXII

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1950

No. 3

ALL-INCLUSIVE DRIVE AGAINST ADMISSIONS TAX FORMULATED

Meeting in Washington, D. C., on Tuesday of this week, the Council of Motion Picture Organization's Committee on Taxation and Legislation, headed by Abram F. Myers, formulated plans for a nationwide campaign to enlist the aid of the public in the battle for repeal of the Federal admissions tax.

Included in the strategy mapped out by the Committee are the use of trailers and lobby posters; the circulation of petitions to Congressmen, signed by the public; and the enlistment of support from newspapers and radio broadcasters to disseminate the motion picture industry's views on the burdensome nature of the tax.

The Committee approved also plans for the distribution of a press book to every exhibitor in the country, in which will be outlined the techniques that should be followed to win public support, not only for the present fight against the tax, but also for any future campaigns against local or state tax impositions. The press book should be in the mails within a week or ten days.

Letters of instruction have already been mailed to all exchange managers in the different distribution centers, outlining what procedures they should follow to help defeat the tax.

Meanwhile, on the legislative front, the Senate on Wednesday rejected by a vote of 43 to 32 a proposal to cut excise taxes, including the admission tax. This defeat, however, is no cause for discouragement, for the proposal was in the form of an amendment to the disputed oleo margarine bill, and the rejection was brought about by an unusual parliamentary situation. Actually, the proposal to cut excise taxes is favored by a majority of the Senators, with those who voted against the amendment to the oleo bill preferring that a vote on the excise tax cut stand on its own merits.

The COMPO Committee is doing a fine job for the industry in this tax battle. The admission tax affects the business of every exhibitor, and it should not be necessary to urge any of you to get behind the campaign to the fullest extent.

STEVE BROIDY'S PLEA FOR GREATER EXHIBITOR SUPPORT

Speaking to the trade press in Hollywood last week, Steve Broidy, president of Monogram and Allied Artists, asked the reporters to convey to the exhibitors a plea for greater support for "B" pictures.

Mr. Broidy, who enjoys the confidence of the trade paper writers because of his straightforwardness,

wants to continue improving his "B" product by spending more money for it, but he wants the exhibitors to know that neither his company nor any other company can increase its budget on that type of picture unless the exhibitors pay to the distributor a price based, not on class, but on quality.

Most exhibitors, he complained, adjust their rentals for the supporting features by how much they paid for the top features, many of which are "anemic" and depend on good supporting features for their success.

Monogram has the good will of the exhibitors, and they will, no doubt, heed Steve Broidy's plea for greater support. At the Allied convention in Minneapolis last October, Maury Goldstein, Monogram's general sales manager, was received by the exhibitor leaders, particularly by Jack Kirsch, the Allied leader from Chicago, with sympathy and was promised support.

One way by which the exhibitors can render substantial aid to Monogram as well as to any other of the lesser producing-distributing companies is, where possible, to give extended playing time to their good pictures, even if it is not required under the contract terms. In this manner the exhibitor is not hurt, and the distributor is helped.

The exhibitor, in his dealings with companies like Monogram, must always bear in mind that the independent producer is necessary for the well being of the business. If this type of producer should become extinct, the number of pictures available to the exhibitor annually would drop considerably, and film rentals would shoot skyhigh.

OVERCOMING COMPETITION FROM TELEVISION

Other than a greater number of meritorious pictures, the one thing that can help an exhibitor to overcome competition from television is to make his theatre as comfortable for picture patrons as is the home for television. This, of course, may require extensive alterations, with sanification of the air in the theatre, repainting and decorating, making the front attractive both by paint and light, and modernization of rest rooms, points that must not be overlooked.

One of the most important comfort-giving innovations, however, is the staggering of the seats. Nowadays, the arrangements of the seats in the theatre conforms preponderately to the old system whereby one seat is behind the other seat.

If an exhibitor wants to know what an effort the

(Continued on back page)

**"Blue Grass of Kentucky" with
Bill Williams, Jane Nigh
and Ralph Morgan**

(Monogram, January 22; time, 72 min.)

Excellent! It is one of the best horse racing pictures produced in some time. To begin with, the action keeps one interested from start to finish. Then again, there are no vicious villains to make the picture a wild melodrama; and because most of the characters are sympathetic, one is pleased and wishes that the Ralph Morgan clan will fulfill their desire to win the Kentucky Derby, and that the heroine will get her man. Ralph Morgan is believable as a veteran horse trainer, and Robert (Buzz) Henry does fine work as a jockey. Bill Williams, as the hero, and Jane Nigh, as the heroine, are pleasant and act their parts well. There are several exciting horse races, but the final one is the most thrilling. The photography is in Cinecolor, and with the exception of some of the long shots it is sharp and clear. Both Jeffrey Bernerd, the producer, and William Beaudine, the director, deserve credit for having turned out a fine entertainment:—

The families of Ralph Morgan and Russell Hicks are neighboring horse breeders in Kentucky. Jane Nigh, Hicks' daughter, is in love with Bill Williams, Morgan's eldest son, but Bill refuses to encourage her because she is the daughter of a millionaire and he is the son of an impoverished father. Although both families are friendly rivals, Hicks' horses, better thoroughbreds, always win. Morgan requests that his horse be mated with Macedonian, Hicks' prize horse, but Hicks' manager refuses. Jane, despairing that Bill will ever marry her as long as he remains poor, secretly takes Macedonian to a field to mate with Morgan's horse. Surprised when the horse foals, Morgan names the colt Blue Grass of Kentucky. After a period of extensive training, Blue Grass, with Morgan's younger son (Robert "Buzz" Henry) as the jockey, wins his first race, but afterwards fails to win. Morgan continues to train Blue Grass and enters him in the Kentucky Derby. To the surprise of every one Blue Grass wins the Derby, but Hicks' manager enters a protest with the stewards on the ground that Morgan registered Blue Grass falsely as a thoroughbred. Lest Blue Grass be disqualified, Jane reveals to the stewards the secret of his parentage. Hicks, unaware that his manager was going to protest the entry, resorts to a white lie by informing the stewards that he had encouraged his daughter to mate Macedonian with Morgan's horse. Blue Grass is then declared the winner, and Bill, sticking to an agreement he had made with Jane, consents to marry her because of Blue Grass' victory.

W. Scott Darling wrote the screen play. The cast includes Pierre Watkin, Ted Hecht, Stephen S. Harrison and others.

Excellent family entertainment.

"The Gay Lady" with an all-British cast

(Eagle Lion, December; time, 95 min.)

A lavishly produced, British-made backstage comedy-drama with some music, photographed in Technicolor, but it is only moderately entertaining and of doubtful value to the American exhibitors, except, perhaps, in theatres that specialize in British product. Set in the gas-light days and tracing the career of a vivacious young singer who becomes a Gaiety Girl and marries a Duke, the story is a flimsy affair at best and too long drawn out. It does have its entertaining moments in the satirical fun poked at the British nobility, but it is doubtful if the American picture-goers will fully appreciate this type of humor. All in all, it is not likely to win word-of-mouth praise from those who will see it:—

Having worked her way up from small-time vaudeville, Jean Kent accepts an offer to become one of the Gaiety Girls, most of whom were gold-diggers, constantly pursued by young members of the nobility. Jean, a perky but respectable girl, has eyes only for Andrew Crawford, a balloonist, whose flying activities kept them apart most of the

time. In due time she becomes impressed by the lavish gifts showered on her colleagues, and accepts a date with James Donald, a young duke, who soon falls victim to her unspoiled charm. He proposes marriage, and Jean, seeing no prospect of replacing the balloon in Crawford's affections, accepts. She ingratiates herself with his parents and lives a most happy life until Donald, to help out a philandering friend, reluctantly takes a chorus girl to lunch in an exclusive restaurant. Meanwhile Jean has a chance meeting with Crawford and invites him to lunch at the same place. Their meeting results in a violent quarrel between Jean and Donald later in the day, with each accusing the other of infidelity. News of their marital differences soon reaches the ears of the gossip-mongers, and the resultant remarks cause even greater misunderstanding between them. Eventually, however, both realize that they are behaving childishly and become reunited.

It was produced by Hugh Stewart and directed by Brian Desmond Hurst from a screen play by C. Denis Freeman, based on the novel by Caryl Brahms and S. J. Simon. The cast includes Bill Owen, Lana Morris and others.

Adult entertainment.

**"Backfire" with Virginia Mayo,
Edmond O'Brien and Gordon MacRae**

(Warner Bros., February 11; time, 91 min.)

A fairly good mystery melodrama. Revolving around the efforts of a war veteran to find his missing buddy and to clear him of a murder charge, the story unfolds through a series of flashbacks and the events are rather complicated, but it generates considerable suspense and manages to hold one's interest well. The action is a bit slow at the beginning, but, once the hero starts his search and follows a series of clues, it picks up speed and is fraught with numerous melodramatic incidents. The fact that the murderer's identity is not disclosed until the end helps to keep the spectator on edge. The production values are good, and the direction and acting capable:—

While recuperating from an operation in a veteran's hospital, Gordon MacRae is concerned over the disappearance of Edmond O'Brien, his war buddy, with whom he planned to buy a ranch. One night, while in a semi-coma, he is visited by Viveca Lindfors, a mysterious woman, who informs him that O'Brien had been in a serious accident. On the following morning, MacRae's nurse, Virginia Mayo, and his doctor, interpret the strange visit as a dream born in MacRae's troubled mind since the hospital had no record of the visitor. Released from the hospital, MacRae is picked up by the police who question him about O'Brien's whereabouts and inform him that O'Brien is wanted for the murder of Richard Rober, a gambler. MacRae, refusing to believe that his buddy had committed murder, starts an investigation of his own, accompanied by Virginia, with whom he had fallen in love. He follows a series of clues, during which he has interviews with several persons who had dealings with O'Brien, including Dane Clark, a former army friend now in the mortuary business, and Frances Robinson, the dead gambler's widow. The information obtained from them leads MacRae through a maze of melodramatic incidents, including several other murders, until he learns that O'Brien had acted as bodyguard for a mysterious gambler known only as "Lew," whose girl-friend, Viveca, had fallen in love with O'Brien, and that "Lew" had framed O'Brien for Rober's murder to get him out of the way. After a series of complicated events, MacRae discovers that "Lew" is none other than Clark, and that O'Brien, seriously injured, was his prisoner. Aided by the police, MacRae rescues O'Brien, while Clark, attempting a getaway, is shot dead.

It was produced by Anthony Veiller and directed by Vincent Sherman from a screen play by Larry Marcus, Ivan Goff and Ben Roberts, based on a story by Mr. Marcus.

Adult fare.

"Mark of the Gorilla" with Johnny Weissmuller

(Columbia, February; time, 68 min.)

Fairly good for children but hardly a picture for adults, for the action is the same as is seen in almost every jungle picture—monkeys flitting from tree to tree, birds dispersing in all directions, and other animals fleeing some danger, known and unknown. The film libraries are full of such stock shots, and when one sees one jungle picture one sees them all. There is nothing to recommend the action, and the direction is no credit to Bill Berke, a tried and true director. It is manifest that he had to get the picture out in a hurry and had to forego conforming to logic. For instance, in the fight between the native rangers and the crooks, the crooks are armed only with pistols and the rangers with rifles, yet the crooks are able to shoot and kill rangers while they remain unharmed. Even children may find such a lack of logic too much to swallow:—

Johnny Weissmuller (Jungle Jim), on his way to Preserve Headquarters to meet Selmer Jackson, the Government game warden, saves Suzanne Dalbert, a native princess, from an attack by a gorilla. The animal's scream of pain, like a human cry, astonishes Johnny. Suzanne, who was trying to locate a fabulous amount of gold stolen from her tribe, explains to Johnny that she had become separated from her traveling caravan. Arriving at Preserve Headquarters with Suzanne, Johnny is informed by Trudy Marshall, the warden's niece, that her uncle is seriously ill with jungle fever, and that Onslow Stevens, supposedly a doctor and zoologist, is taking care of him. Onslow's reluctance to let Johnny see Jackson rouses his suspicions. Jackson, before lapsing into a coma, informs Johnny that, during the war, the invading Nazis had stolen the gold from Suzanne's people, and that the Government suspected that the treasure was buried somewhere on the Preserve. Meanwhile it comes out that Stevens is the head of a gang of thieves masquerading as gorillas, that he knows the location of the hidden gold, and that he was posing as a doctor to get Jackson out of the way. Investigating Jackson's claim, Johnny discovers that the "gorilla" he had attacked is a human being. He comes upon the secret entrance to a cave, where the gold is hidden, but before entering he orders Trudy to summon the native rangers. Stevens and his henchmen discover Johnny and overpower him, but Trudy and the rangers arrive in time to save him and to capture the crooks.

It was produced by Sam Katzman from an original screen play by Carroll Young, based on the newspaper feature, "Jungle Jim," appearing in "Puck," the comic weekly.

Children may enjoy it.

"The Flying Saucer" with Mikel Conrad

(Film Classics, January; time, 69 min.)

A weak program adventure melodrama, with fair exploitation possibilities because of the wide publicity given to mysterious flying saucers that people claim to have seen hurtling through the air. Revolving around the efforts of an American playboy to learn the secret of the saucer, hidden in Alaska, and to prevent Russian agents from obtaining it, its espionage-like story is completely far-fetched and, from the viewpoint of action, pretty feeble except for some fantastic melodramatics at the finish. Not much can be said for either the direction or the acting. Most impressive, however, is the striking Alaskan scenery, with the famed Taku glacier, near Juneau, photographed effectively:—

Mikel Conrad, a playboy, is requested by Russell Hicks, a Government official, to investigate rumors that the flying saucer is emanating from somewhere near Juneau, and that Russian agents, stationed in Alaska, were trying to get control of the contraption. To defer suspicion, Conrad goes to his father's Alaskan lodge as a convalescent, accompanied by pretty Pat Garrison, a U. S. agent acting as his nurse. Unknown to them, Hantz Von Teuffen, the lodge caretaker, was one of the Russian agents. Through Frank Darien, an old friend who had rented his fishing trawler to the Russian agents and who had overheard them discuss a deal with the inventor's crooked assistant, Conrad learns that the saucer is hidden at a place called Twin Lakes.

The action then develops into a series of altercations between Conrad and the Russians, ending with the capture of, not only Conrad and Pat, but also the inventor, who wanted to sell the saucer to the United States. The Russians take the three to Twin Lakes through an ice tunnel, planning to dispose of them. Conrad attempts to escape and a gunshot sets in motion an avalanche that buries the Russians alive. The inventor's assistant, unharmed, attempts to escape in the flying saucer, but a hidden bomb explodes the disc in mid-air, killing him and keeping the secret safe for the United States.

In addition to playing the leading role, Mikel Conrad wrote the original story and produced and directed it.

Children may get a kick out of it.

"Black Hand" with Gene Kelly, J. Carrol Naish and Teresa Celli

(MGM, March; time, 93 min.)

A strikingly dramatic film, based on the terrorist activities of the notorious Black Hand society, which flourished in New York's "Little Italy" in the early 1920's, preying on frightened immigrants of Italian extraction. Its mixture of extortion, bombings and killings does not make for a cheerful entertainment, but, owing to the expert direction and the fine acting, it grips one's attention from start to finish. Outstanding performances are contributed by Gene Kelly, as a young Italian who vows vengeance on the Black Hand for the murder of his father, and by J. Carrol Naish, as an Italian-American detective, who sacrifices his life while aiding Kelly to bring the criminal society to justice. The action is charged with suspense and excitement throughout, building up to an explosive climax that will have the picture-goers holding on to their seats. The story, though fictional, is in many respects historically accurate. The production values are excellent, with the settings and back-grounds conveying a ring of authenticity to the proceedings:—

As a boy, Gene Kelly returns to Italy with his mother after his father is killed in an East Side tenement by the Black Hand for seeking police protection because of their demands. Some years later, following the death of his mother, he returns to New York, determined to avenge himself on those responsible for his father's murder. Teresa Celli, his childhood sweetheart, and Naish, who had known him as a boy, urge him to give up his wild scheme of revenge and induce him to organize the neighborhood in a movement to resist the criminals' extortions. But the movement falls to pieces when, at the first meeting, the Black Hand delivers Kelly badly beaten and with a broken leg. Unknown to every one, Marc Lawrence, Teresa's employer and a private banker, was the secret head of the Black Hand, covering his nefarious activities by posing as a respectable business man. Recovering from his injuries, Kelly, through Naish, is given a special assignment by the police department to gather evidence against any one suspected of being a Black Hand member. He succeeds in bringing one criminal to trial and, despite efforts to intimidate witnesses, has the man deported by proving that he was wanted in Naples for murder. Kelly then induces Naish to go to Italy to check police records for information that may lead to the identity of the other criminals. Naish gathers much incriminating evidence, only to be shot by Black Hand members in Naples. But before he dies he succeeds in mailing the evidence to Kelly. Lawrence, informed that the evidence is in the mails, arranges for his henchmen to kidnap Teresa's little brother and threatens to kill him unless Kelly gives up the evidence. Kelly gives in to the demand to save the child from harm, after which he himself is captured and marked for death. At the last minute, however, he manages to set off one of the bombs used by the criminals in their work, saving himself and killing all but Lawrence, whom he pursues and brings to an end with a well-aimed dagger. He recovers the evidence, thus assuring an end to the criminals' activities.

It was produced by William H. Wright and directed by Richard Thorpe from a screen play by Luther Davis, based on a story by Leo Townsend. Adult fare.

patron exerts to see a picture under such a seating arrangement, all he has to do is take a seat as a regular patron; his neck will be ready for a plaster cast by the time the picture is over.

Staggering the seats means taking one seat out of every other row of seats and moving the entire row half-way towards the space thus created so that each seat in the row behind may be placed between two front seats. This method cannot help but preserve the peace of mind of the picture patron and induce him to attend the theatre more often, secure in the knowledge that he can see a picture without getting a crick in the neck.

Another method of making the patron more comfortable is to widen the space between the rows of seats so that the incoming patron may not step on the feet of the seated patron.

Such an innovation will, of course, reduce the number of seats, but the reduction will be worth the sacrifice if the exhibitor should have the comfort of his patrons in mind. Besides, his theatre will then be more attractive and it will serve as an additional reason why patrons who visit the theatre only once each week may be induced to patronize it more frequently.

Still another aid to a patron's comfort is the lighting in the theatre. Many theatre managers believe that, unless the house is pitch-dark, the patrons do not feel that the projection is good. Such a theory is mistaken: the theatre may be illuminated enough to enable a patron to find a seat without the aid of an usher. The light required will not affect the brightness of the picture, provided, of course, that the lighting is indirect.

Having the theatre lighted enough to enable a patron to find his seat is absolutely necessary, particularly in the day-time, and even more so when the sun is shining. On a sunny day, the pupils of a person's eyes are dilated, and when he enters a pitch dark room he cannot see anything. In such a case there is danger in that he will poke his fingers into a seated patron's face, and even his eyes, while trying to find an empty seat by feeling around. An usher with a flashlight is not always present to help him out.

Television, though still young, is proving itself as a competitor to the motion picture theatre in many metropolitan areas, and the competition will become even more formidable as time goes on, for the public is gobbling up the television sets as fast as they are produced. Within a few years there undoubtedly will be national television networks, and most every city, town and hamlet in the country will be within the range of a television station. It follows, therefore, that, with an audience of many millions of viewers available, the sponsors of television shows will increase budgets to improve their programs, thus offering to the people a variety of fine entertainment—all free of charge—in the comfort of their own homes. And that is tough competition for any exhibitor.

The exhibitor, to overcome this competition as best as he can, will have to depend on two factors: (1) a far greater number of meritorious pictures than are available to him today; and (2) a theatre that will enable a patron to see a picture show free from discomforts. Such a combination will help considerably to draw people out of their homes and away from their television sets.

Primarily, however, the only way to combat television competition is through better pictures. And, unless the producers wake up to this fact, the sliding theatre attendance is going to become worse and the picture industry may find itself on the brink of disaster.

A DESERVING TRIBUTE

January 15 to 22 is being observed by all the National Allied units as PETE WOOD WEEK, in tribute to the erstwhile Secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, whose unswerving devotion to the cause of the independent exhibitor for more than twenty-five years has made him one of the foremost exhibitor leaders in the country.

As part of the observance, each of the Allied units has issued its organizational bulletin this week on a special form, on which is printed the following tribute, penned by Abram F. Myers, National Allied's General Counsel and Chairman of the Board:

"To PETE WOOD, Allied stalwart, mellow philosopher, brilliant bulletioneer, and master of the mimeograph, this bulletin is affectionately dedicated.

"Like the pamphleteers of Colonial days he has exerted great influence by the written word and by precept and example has taught us that criticism can be constructive, that while the truth may hurt it cannot be smothered or ignored, and that while satire may singe its victims it should never sear.

"From him stems the great Allied bulletin service which is distinguished by the best talent in all the units and carries to the members accurate information on all important developments together with interpretations and comment which reflect the independent exhibitors' interest and point of view.

"For the foregoing and many additional reasons Allied members everywhere are taking time out to salute PHILIP (PETE) J. WOOD."

Pete Wood richly deserves this tribute, for throughout the years he has been a good servant to the independent exhibitors, working hard and accomplishing much.

BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER

Republic Pictures, which has made great progress under the guidance of Herbert J. Yates, can justifiably look forward to an even brighter future as the result of the long-term deal concluded last week for the exclusive services of producer Merian C. Cooper and director John Ford, a three-time Academy Award winner.

Argosy Productions, the unit headed by Cooper and Ford, was organized several years ago and has thus far produced "Fort Apache," "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon," "Mighty Joe Young" and "Wagon Master" for release through RKO, as well as "3 Godfathers," which was released through MGM.

The advancement of the smaller companies has always been of special interest to HARRISON'S REPORTS, and we are indeed gratified over the sound and steady progress Republic has made under Mr. Yates' expert leadership. Incidentally, "The Sands of Iwo Jima," which is the most expensive picture ever produced by Republic, is doing a smash business, breaking records in almost every one of its engagements.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXXII

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 1950

No 4

AN URGENT CALL TO DUTY

As most of you no doubt know, the President, in his special tax message to Congress this week, urged that reductions be made in the excise taxes, provided the loss in revenue is made up by plugging loopholes in the present tax laws, and by increasing tax levies on corporations, gifts, and estates.

In taking his conditional stand, the President singled out for reductions the taxes on transportation, telephone and telegraph messages, cosmetics, furs, jewelry and leather goods. He made no mention of the tax on theatre admissions, and the omission is interpreted in some quarters to mean that he is opposed to a reduction in this tax.

This interpretation, however, is not shared by Mr. Abram F. Myers, Chairman of COMPO's Committee on Taxation and Legislation, who said that the examples cited by the President "are not exclusive, and it is apparent that they were mentioned because of the moderate amount of revenue involved and for no other reason."

"We have no quarrel with any other industry seeking tax relief and will provoke none," added Mr. Myers, "but we insist that on the basis of merit our claims for the repeal of the admission tax should be at the top of the list and we shall present the facts in support of that claim to the people and to the Congress."

Meanwhile Mr. Myers' Committee, anticipating that repeal of the admission tax would not be included in the President's recommendations, held back the opening shot of the all-industry drive against the tax until Thursday of this week, on which day it arranged for the following campaign material to be shipped to the thirty-one exchange centers for distribution to the theatres through the facilities of National Screen Service:

Twenty million individual petitions to be signed by movie patrons and then sent to Congressmen.

35,000 eight-page brochures outlining the basic strategy of the campaign and containing recommendations on how it should be conducted on the local level.

35,000 four-page listings of the names of members of the Ways and Means Committee, as well as the correct names and addresses of all U. S. Congressmen and Senators.

20,000 fifty-foot trailers to be used on the screens of indoor and outdoor theatres, affording the public for the first time an opportunity to register its protest against this unfair "nuisance tax."

20,000 posters for use in theatre lobbies.

40,000 stickers for box-offices, calling the public's attention to the fact that the tax is a tax on those who can least afford it.

The campaign strategy includes enlisting the entire personnel of production, distribution and exhibition to write or wire Congressmen and Senators, concentrating on the Ways and Means Committee.

Producing the trailer, petitions, literature, etc., for the campaign was the most gigantic assignment Herman Robbins, president of National Screen Service, has ever undertaken—all at no profit to his company. He was drafted by Mr. Myers on Thursday, January 19, and work started on the project on the following day.

The campaign material is being made available to exhibitors at nominal prices, with the cost of the trailer, \$1.50; the petitions, \$1.00 per thousand; and the one-sheet lobby posters, 10c each.

The eight-page brochure was drafted by Mr. Myers and is the result of the Committee's deliberations.

Oscar A. Doob, of Loew's and a Committee member representing the Metropolitan New York Motion Pictures

Theatre Association, with the assistance of Ernest Emerling, Loew's advertising director, prepared much of the material that will be used in the jump-off campaign.

Henderson M. Richey, MGM's exhibitor relations chief, is aide to the Committee, and all campaign material and information will emanate from his office.

An outline of the campaign strategy was given on Wednesday of this week by Mr. Myers in an address he made at 20th Century-Fox's Second Annual Showmanship Meeting, attended by advertising and publicity representatives of affiliated and independent theatres from all over the country. Mr. Myers, in enlisting their aid, had this to say, in part:

"... The several industry groups which for years have been making snoots at one another have found in the tax menace a common ground on which they can stand in defense of their common interests. Not only are all factions united in the common cause, but they are working together with right good will, and the pledges of support which I have received from rival organizations have been no less cordial than those received from the Allied stalwarts.

"... This united effort is as sincere as it is inspiring and it should command the respect and support of everyone.

"Our task is tremendous, involving a two-front war. Our first job, as I have said, is to secure repeal of the existing taxes on admissions. Then we—that is, our successors—will have to remain ever alert to see that such taxes are never again imposed. We have got to sell the Congress of the United States, the legislators of the several states and local authorities everywhere the idea that it is wrong to impose special taxes on the motion picture business which are not imposed on all other enterprises.

"We must teach legislators and all other public officials that they cannot saddle enormous tax burdens on this great communications industry—for that is what it is—simply because theatre cashiers can be used as tax collectors without cost and the boxoffice is regarded as an 'easy touch.'

"I am sure that when you gentlemen write advertising copy for motion pictures you believe every word you write, however much the ivory tower critics may sometimes disagree with you. Be that as it may, I now summon you to a task where your probity will never be assailed. For in the campaign to protect the motion picture industry against unfair and burdensome taxation we have a straightforward, convincing story to tell, every word of which is gospel.

"This industry in its public relations sometimes has been vulnerable to counter-attack and, therefore, has grown timid about asserting its rights. But in the present case we are on such solid ground that we can wage our campaign without fear of reprisal from any quarter.

"There is no valid reason why our industry, which affords wholesome entertainment to the masses at a price within their means should be made the subject of punitive or regulatory taxation. We refuse to be permanently bracketed with liquor and tobacco for taxing purposes. And we are within our constitutional rights in petitioning the Congress and other public bodies for a redress of our grievances.

"On this tax issue it is time for the industry to stop bleating like a lamb and to start roaring like a lion—and I do not mean that gentle old trademark lion.

"... I want to put it to you with all the emphasis at my command that we are going to strike from the shoulder for our fundamental rights and we are not going to apologize to anyone...."

"I tell you frankly, gentlemen, that unless the industry makes an all-out effort to secure repeal of the admission tax at this session of Congress, and succeeds, the industry is

(Continued on next page)

AN URGENT CALL TO DUTY

(Continued from front page)

doomed to remain the victim of existing discriminatory taxes and the target for additional ones.

"For mind you, when we have succeeded in eliminating the Federal tax, our battle is only half won.

"For the time being numerous governors and mayors are aiding us in our efforts to terminate the Federal tax, but we shall travel the same road for only a short distance.

"They are aiding us for the avowed purpose of supplanting the Federal tax with local levies which will be just as onerous and just as unfair. They are already whetting their knives for a slice of the boxoffice take. That problem we will deal with when we reach it. We cannot let it deter us from making our fight against the Federal tax now.

"For even if the Federal tax is not repealed, we still are faced with local taxes, not in lieu of, but in addition to, the Federal tax. And if you think that I am an alarmist, consider the sorry state of the exhibitors in Mississippi, who have a state admission tax on top of the Federal levy.

"The campaign on which we are embarking calls for the mobilization and the utilization of all the industry's personnel, with all their diversified talents. Once it swings into action the industry will turn in a brilliant performance. But the influences arrayed against us are so potent that we must gain allies wherever we can. The theatre-going public has a vital stake in the success of our efforts and the public in general, already tax conscious, can be made movie-tax conscious by pointing out the dangers inherent in discriminatory taxation.

"First in point of time and importance, therefore, is a bang-up publicity job.

"The plan devised by your Committee on Taxation calls for the marshaling of public opinion against all taxes on theatre admissions.

"That plan contemplates the formation in every exchange center and, as far as possible, in every community of a local committee to carry on the publicity campaign outlined therein. It will be the function of those committees to wait upon and engage the support of the newspapers and broadcasters. . . . In addition, civic leaders will be asked to interest themselves in the campaign by writing letters to the Senators and Congressmen and persuading others to do so. Chambers of commerce, boards of trade, labor unions, luncheon clubs, fraternal orders and other groups will be asked to support the campaign, both by adopting resolutions and by individual letter-writing.

"But it is our patrons who have a definite, tangible stake in the campaign and it is to them that we look for the most enthusiastic support. The admission tax is a handicap to and a burden upon the motion picture business. It makes movie-going expensive and reduces the amount of spending money in the community, thereby discouraging theatre attendance. But our patrons actually pay the tax and that fact must be brought home to them in every conceivable way.

"Every theatre will be asked to run a trailer which the Tax Committee has devised—or else one of its own devising—pointing out the unfair and burdensome nature of the tax and asking the audience to help eliminate it. Also theatres will be asked to place desks and writing facilities in their lobbies so that their patrons can sign petitions in the form of cards addressed to the Congressman for the district in which the theatre is located.

"Since there are theatres in every Congressional district, it is believed that these petitions, signed by millions of theatre-goers, will impress upon the Congress the deep dissatisfaction of this great body of citizens—and voters—with the amusements tax.

"This cooperation and aid from persons outside the industry will not be forthcoming merely for the asking. The American people before they sign a petition or write a letter must have a stake in the subject-matter or be convinced that the cause to be advanced is just. In the present case we must disabuse the public's mind of certain false notions which have evolved from the glamor of the business or been implanted by reckless reporting. We have got to remove the dollar sign from the industry and present the facts as they are.

"For example, there is a wide-spread impression that the movie industry is entirely made up of huge, melon-cutting

corporations and that all engaged therein enjoy princely incomes.

"It is imperative that the public in general and public officials in particular, be made to understand that the admission tax is not a tax on Hollywood—that it does not reach to those fabulous salaries which until recently were blazoned in the headlines. Those salaries, I have been told, are being readjusted to conform to changed economic conditions; but however that may be, the Government lays violent hands on Hollywood salaries by means of the income tax, just as it reaches into our meager purses at stated intervals. The admission tax has nothing whatever to do with those salaries.

"Also it is necessary to disabuse the public's mind of any lingering impression that the movie industry is all 'big business.' As the representative of independent exhibitors I am well-qualified to speak on this point. That part of the industry which is immediately affected by the admission tax—the exhibition branch—consists of thousands of small business men. Almost two-thirds of the motion picture theatres in the United States gross an average of less than \$600 a week per theatre—and that is small business in any man's language.

"Finally, the movies not only are small business, they are small-town business. Close to one-half of the total number of motion picture seats in the United States are in towns of 25,000 population or less.

"These small business men operate on a narrow margin of profit and a relatively small falling off in attendance affects them gravely. The trend already is downward and this must be halted if those theatres are going to continue to serve the public.

"But beyond all this is the inherent viciousness of special taxation—the penalizing of one industry by taxes which are not imposed on all alike. That sort of taxation is plainly contrary to the principles upon which our Government was founded. We are confident that when the American people realize the true nature of the admission tax it will offend against their sense of fair play and they will support our cause whether they be theatre-goers or not.

"The foregoing ideas, arguments and suggestions are among those set forth in an eight-page folder, copies of which are now being forwarded to every film exchange, every circuit head, every exhibitor association and to every theatre in the United States. In addition, trailer prints, lobby posters and signs, and petition cards will be forwarded to the film centers for distribution to the theatres before the end of this week. The production, printing and distribution of so vast an amount of material in such a short time has been made possible through the generosity of Herman Robbins, of National Screen Service Corporation, who has virtually sidetracked all other business in order to meet the Committee's time schedule.

"In behalf of my Committee, I salute Herman Robbins, his company and its staff.

"Our Tax Committee is composed of men of broad experience in the operation of theatres, in organization affairs and in legislative work. I cannot now take the time adequately to pay tribute to my associates on the Committee and to H. M. Richey, our special aide. The enthusiasm with which they have carried on, the time and energy they have devoted to the task, the talents and ability they have displayed, and their loyalty to and forbearance with their chairman have earned my everlasting gratitude. . . ."

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that Mr. Myers' words will sink deep into the mind of every person who makes his living in the motion picture industry.

The industries and businesses most affected by the excise taxes, even those mentioned by the President in his tax message, are generally dissatisfied with the relief he proposed. Many are opposed to a mere reduction of these taxes, claiming that nothing short of their complete elimination will suffice to stop the loss of business.

There is so much feeling against excise taxes that there is going to be plenty of stress and trouble in Congress during the coming months. And the industries and businesses that make a concerted, all-out effort to prove to Congress that the excise taxes imposed upon them are unfair and burdensome will be the ones that will get relief. The meek and the lazy will get it in the neck.

There is no time to lose! Act today on repeal of the amusement tax!

"Dakota Lil" with George Montgomery, Marie Windsor and Rod Cameron

(20th Century-Fox, February; time, 88 min.)

A fairly good Western, photographed by the Cinecolor process. It is an above-average picture of its type, with production values that are more lavish than is customary. Its story about a special government agent's efforts to track down a gang of thieves and to recover a fortune in unsigned currency is somewhat involved and illogical, but its allotment of brawls, chases and gunfights offers enough excitement to satisfy the action fans. At times, however, the action is marked by violence and brutality, making it too tense and harrowing for children and squeamish adults. The direction and acting are good, and the photography first-rate:—

George Montgomery, a celebrated Indian fighter, is appointed by the Secret Service as a special agent for the express purpose of tracking down a gang of outlaws who had vanished into the mountains after stealing \$100,000 in newly-printed but unsigned bank notes, which could be made passable by an expert forger. Posing as a hardened outlaw, Montgomery goes to Mexico to enlist the aid of Marie Windsor, an alluring cafe singer and shrewd forger, who was wanted by the American authorities. The promise of easy money for forging the needed signatures on the unsigned bank notes arouses Marie's interest. She tricks Montgomery into revealing that Rod Cameron, a Wyoming gambling house proprietor, was the leader of the outlaws, then steals his horse and leaves him stranded in the desert while she gallops off to Wyoming. Arriving there, Marie uses her allure to get a job as Cameron's featured singer, but Montgomery shows up within a few days and compels her to stick to their agreement. He masterminds a scheme whereby Marie makes known her forging talents to Cameron and concludes a deal with him to make the stolen money passable. Cameron takes her to the gang's stronghold in the mountains to show her the stolen bank notes. While they return to town to obtain the equipment needed to handle the forgery, Montgomery, who had followed them, makes a daring attempt to recover the money. He becomes involved in a furious battle with the guards, barely escaping with his life, but, in the complicated events that follow, his secret service status is discovered. Furious at his deception, Marie plans to get rid of him, but her love for him proves too strong; she turns to the side of law and order, helping him to bring Cameron to justice and to recover the loot.

It was produced by Edward L. Alperson and directed by Lesley Selander from a screen play by Maurice Geraghty, based upon a story by Frank Gruber. Jack Jungmeyer, Jr. was associate producer. The cast includes John Emery, Wallace Ford and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Belle of Old Mexico" with Estelita Rodriguez and Robert Rockwell

(Republic, January 3; time, 70 min.)

If it doesn't take much to make your audiences laugh, this Trucolor slapstick comedy, with some music, should get by with them as a supporting feature. Discriminating patrons, however, probably will find little to laugh at, for the story is thin and illogical, and the comedy, for the most part, forced. It does have some funny moments here and there, but, on the whole, what passes for comedy is just plain silliness. Worked into the proceedings are several catchy songs, sung pleasantly by Estelita Rodriguez, a Latin-American newcomer, who speaks and sings with a slight accent:—

Robert Rockwell, scion of a socially-prominent California family and youthful president of a college founded by his grandfather, is constantly reminded by Thurston Hall, head of the board of trustees, that he must conduct himself with decorum. Having made a pledge to a dying wartime buddy to assume guardianship of his little sister, Rockwell makes plans to take the child into his home and to provide for her education. He goes to Lower California to fetch her and is shocked when she turns out to be Estelita Rodriguez, a beautiful young woman with a mind of her own. When Dorothy Patrick, Rockwell's fortune-hunting fiancée, discovers that Estelita is in love with him and that he is equally smitten with her, she plots to break up the romance by making Estelita appear to be a bad influence on him, thus

annoying the board of trustees. Aware of Dorothy's trickery, Dave Willock and Gordon Jones, Rockwell's pals, expose Dorothy for what she is and prove to Rockwell that Estelita's love for him is sincere. Taking courage from Estelita's love, Rockwell tells off Hall, fully aware that he was endangering his job as president. Hall is shocked, but when Jones, a millionaire, hints that he might be prevailed upon to make a sizable endowment to the college, Estelita's and Rockwell's future happiness is assured.

It was produced by Edward J. White and directed by R. G. Springsteen from a story by Bradford Ropes and Francis Swann. The cast includes Florence Bates, Fritz Feld, Carlos Molina and Orchestra and others.

Harmless for children.

"Key to the City" with Clark Gable and Loretta Young

(MGM, February; time, 99 min.)

A gay romantic comedy-melodrama, with many hilarious moments. Movie-goers who will be drawn to the box-office by the magic of Clark Gable's name will not be disappointed, for, as a tough, dynamic and uninhibited small-city mayor who finds romance with a female mayor at a mayors' convention, Gable is cast in the type of role that is sure to please his fans. Equally good is Loretta Young, as the beautiful but business-like lady mayor who has no time for romance until she crosses paths with Gable. The action is fast and the audience is kept in suspense because of the many complications Gable and Miss Young find themselves in, including being jailed twice, as a result of the convention hi-jinks. Things happen throughout that keep one amused, and many of the situations will arouse hearty laughter. Frank Morgan, as Gable's careless fire chief; Lewis Stone, as Miss Young's uncle; James Gleason, as an embarrassed police lieutenant who tries to cover up the jams the principals get themselves into; and Marilyn Maxwell, as an "atom" dancer, contribute much to the general hilarity. A melodramatic angle involving crooked politicians is good for considerable excitement, with Gable given ample opportunity to use his fists:—

Attending a mayors' convention in San Francisco, Gable, a former longshoreman now mayor of a small west coast city, mistakes Loretta, mayor of a small Maine city, for a "good-time" girl when she comes to his hotel suite to attend a committee meeting, which he, as chairman, had postponed without notifying her. Loretta, claiming that the postponement was contrary to parliamentary procedure, demands that the meeting be held that evening. Amused, Gable agrees and later sends her the address of the meeting hall, which turns out to be a honky-tonk cabaret. Loretta enters into the spirit of the gayety so as not to appear snobbish. A quarrel between two drunks sets off a brawl in which Loretta and Gable become involved. Both are arrested along with the other guests, but immediately released by police lieutenant James Gleason when he learns their identities. Gleason tries to keep the story from inquisitive reporters, but an enterprising photographer succeeds in snapping a picture of Loretta in the station house, causing her no end of embarrassment when it is published on the newspapers' front pages. On the following night Gable meets Loretta again when both seek a taxicab to take them to a costume party. Dressed as a child, she refuses to share a cab with him and complains to a policeman that he is annoying her. This leads to a second visit to the jail, but before the evening is over both fall in love and agree to marry on the following day. A misunderstanding ensues that same night when Loretta sees Marilyn Maxwell, a bubble dancer, leaving Gable's suite. Actually, Marilyn had visited him to return his coat, which he had given her on the night of the cabaret raid. To add to the complications, Loretta believes that Gable had run out on her when he is compelled to rush back to his city that night to foil a crooked political plot. After many humorous events, Gable eventually convinces Loretta of his love, and in the final sequence, while Gable administers a sound thrashing to one of the crooked politicians, Loretta takes on Marilyn, who had joined the crooks in a dirty scheme to blacken Gable's reputation.

It was produced by Z. Wayne Griffin and directed by George Sidney from a screen play by Robert Riley Crutcher, based on a story by Albert Beich. The cast includes Raymond Walburn, Pamela Britton and others.

Some of the comedy is a bit risqué, but it has been handled delicately. Young children will not understand it.

IT'S THAT MAN AGAIN!

It probably will come as no surprise to most exhibitors to learn that Samuel Goldwyn has let go with another blast at them, which is something he does annually in an apparent effort to get publicity.

Speaking at a trade press conference in New York this week, Goldwyn, whose remarks about exhibitors are beginning to sound like a broken record that keeps repeating itself, gave out with his usual bleats about exhibitor indifference in the merchandising of pictures; opening the doors of their theatres without an effort to encourage business through proper exploitation of the attraction; and all the other stock complaints for which he is noted.

Claiming that the exhibitors' attitude is "nothing short of disgraceful," and that they "certainly do not treat pictures with respect," Goldwyn stated that the producers, not only have to make the pictures, "but we also have to send out our own publicity and exploitation men and spend most of the money for advertising."

"This situation," he continued, "has prevailed for some time now because the producers are suckers. The producer's prime responsibility is to let the exhibitor know about his product through trade paper ads. After that, the exhibitor should carry the ball."

HARRISON'S REPORTS has always commented on Goldwyn's annual snide remarks about the exhibitors, but since he has nothing new to say we hesitate to comment at this time lest we, too, sound like a broken record.

A clue to the reason for Goldwyn's latest tirade may be found, however, in the following open letter, which Chick Lewis published in his January 14 issue of *Showmen's Trade Review*:

"Mr. Sam Goldwyn
"Hollywood, U.S.A.

"Dear Sam:

"Industry history will probably record, and most certainly will remember, the outstanding trade advertising campaign that definitely contributed so much to making 'Best Years of Our Lives' the phenomenal success it was from every angle.

"Now you have another picture which, according to reports, is fine entertainment—'My Foolish Heart.'

"For some strange reason there has been so little trade advertising on this production that it would be no surprise if it develops that the exhibitor branch of our industry remains only luke-warm towards it.

"What we would like to know is just this: If your terrific trade campaign on 'Best Years' was smart business, why doesn't the same rule apply to 'Foolish Heart'?

"Surely you wouldn't want any exhibitor to believe that the lack of trade advertising is an indication that the picture will not do good business at the box-office. Or that you, personally, have little confidence in it.

"We are not suggesting that you duplicate as extensive a campaign on 'Heart' as you did on 'Years,' but why the complete reversal?"

Goldwyn has not yet answered Chick.

PROGRESSIVENESS IN MERCHANDISING

In an effort to chart an intelligent course, and to interchange ideas on advertising, publicity and exploitation, more than seventy-five leading advertising and publicity heads associated with affiliated and independent circuits in the United States and Canada met January 25-27 with 20th Century-Fox officials in New York at the company's second annual showmanship meeting.

The first meeting, which was held last July, proved to be an outstanding success.

Slated for discussion at the meetings were such topics as new merchandising methods; an analysis of trailer appeal in its application to advance selling; the progress of television, its effect on theatres, and the use of the medium as a selling aid for motion pictures; outdoor advertising; the

development of young audiences; specific advertising plans for forthcoming 20th Century-Fox pictures; and the use of new techniques in merchandising that have appeared during the past year.

The company officials who spoke at the opening session, including Spyros P. Skouras, Al Lichtman, Andy Smith, Jr., and Charles Einfeld, who presided, were optimistic on the business outlook for 1950, but each stressed the importance of getting behind the pictures of all companies with every conceivable idea to attract the vast number of people who do not attend movies regularly.

Mr. Einfeld, 20th-Fox's vice-president in charge of advertising and publicity, who conceived the idea of these merchandising meetings, is to be congratulated for his progressiveness in bringing together annually the industry's top advertising and exploitation experts. These men, by interchanging ideas, discussing mutual problems, and offering suggestions cannot help but enhance the popularity of the motion picture to the ultimate benefit of both the exhibitor and the producer-distributor.

Although the days when business was lush are over, the national income is still very high and, by all accounts, people have money to spend for entertainment. As Mr. Einfeld put it to the delegates: "Business in 1950 will be good for those who make it good. The business will be there for any one who is able to go out and get it. It is up to us, the merchandisers, to meet the competition for our share of the dollar."

BOULDER THEATRE
Boulder City, Nevada

January 23, 1950

Mr. P. S. Harrison
HARRISON'S REPORTS
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York 20, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

Your own comments together with the reprints of letters, which you have received in respect to Chill Wills and the advisability of encouraging Warner Brothers to consider him for the all-important role of Will Rogers, in the *LIFE OF WILL ROGERS*, was indeed most interesting, and brings to mind wartime experiences in both Greenland and Iceland.

While on temporary duty in Greenland, Chill came through with a troupe of entertainers and, being the natural and genuine type of person that he is, it didn't take long to discover that we had a very good mutual friend in one, Frank Whitbeck. As a result, a most enjoyable acquaintance was developed. I watched with considerable interest not only his planned and well-rehearsed performances, but also the many impromptu and unscheduled appearances made during the several days we were weathered in. Both in Greenland and later Iceland where again the troupe had to remain longer than planned due to weather, Chill was able to appear time and again before the same groups always with something new and entertaining. This he accomplished with a natural ease and without resorting to "smut," which in my opinion is the keenest test of a comedian. An interesting coincidence is that the men in and around Camp Knox, Reykjavik, Iceland, coined and used the expression "Chill, the Will Rogers of the Arctic."

Of course, being from Oklahoma and in my opinion possessing great acting ability, I naturally have always had a "hankering" to play the role of Will Rogers, myself. But since the war, the operation of two theatres has kept me running like hell just to stand still. As a result, I haven't had the time or money to develop contacts in and around Warner Brothers that would place me in the position of receiving fair consideration. Such being my unfortunate position, I bow to one, CHILL WILLS. Seriously, I hope that he is given the role. He is the natural one for it.

My very best wishes to you, Pete.

Sincerely,

(signed) Earl J. Brothers

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PUBLIC SUPPORT IN TAX FIGHT HEARTENING

Reports from different parts of the country indicate that the industry is doing a bang-up job of winning public support in the battle for repeal of the Federal twenty per cent admission tax.

The response of the public has been most heartening, with many exhibitors reporting that an average of seven out of ten patrons are signing individual petitions and protest cards to be sent to Congressional representatives. These petitions and cards are made available to the movie-goers in the lobbies of the theatres.

The COMPO tax committee, through National Screen Service, has distributed twenty million of these petitions to the nation's theatres, but public response has been so overwhelming that ten million more petitions have been ordered to meet the demand.

Heartening also is the splendid support that the industry is receiving from civic leaders, local and state officials, labor unions, radio broadcasters, newspapers, magazines and numerous local and national organizations. But most important is the response of the public, for when either a Congressman or a Senator is deluged with petitions and protest cards from agitated constituents it is only natural that he will be influenced and will take a deeper and more active interest in helping to eliminate the tax. The exhibitors should, therefore, concentrate their appeal directly to the movie patrons, who must pay this nuisance tax, and get them to sign the petitions.

As to the best way to handle the signed petitions and cards on which the movie-goers are registering their protests, the COMPO tax committee is recommending the following procedure, according to Oscar A. Doob, an executive of Loew's and a member of the Committee:

Whenever each theatre has two or three hundred signed blanks, they should be wrapped and mailed parcel post directly to the Congressman representing the district in which the theatre is located. Petitions to Congressmen should be sent care of House Office Building, Washington, D. C. Signed protests to Senators should be sent care of Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C.

Repeat this procedure each time a few hundred petitions accumulate so that there will be a steady stream of thousands of cards going to every lawmaker. Keeping these petitions flowing into Washington will be much more effective than big shipments one at a time, according to the Committee.

A question that needs to be touched upon, for it is

most important to the basic strategy of the drive, is that of passing on to the movie patrons any reduction in the admission tax. A number of the large circuits and many hundreds of independent exhibitors, through their organizations, have taken a formal stand on this matter, pledging to cut back their admission prices to the extent of the tax reduction. Although the feeling prevails that all exhibitors would follow through on such a policy as a matter of course, a definite pledge to that effect is needed to remove any doubt that may exist. Besides, such a pledge should result in many more millions of petitions being signed by the public.

To be considered also is the fact that members of the House Ways and Means Committee, at hearings that probably will be held some time this month, undoubtedly will ask industry spokesmen who testify whether the theatres would be willing to pass on any tax-saving to the public. It cannot be expected that this powerful Committee will look with favor on the abolishment of the tax unless the industry spokesmen can offer assurances that an overwhelming majority of the country's exhibitors have agreed to reflect any tax cut with a corresponding cut in admission prices.

A GOAL THAT MUST BE ATTAINED

Beginning this week, the campaign leading up to the observance of Brotherhood Week during the week of February 19-26 gets underway.

In past years the motion picture industry has done much to make Brotherhood Week an assured success from an educational and informational point of view. It has not done too well, however, in the matter of raising the funds needed to carry on this inspiring work.

The record shows that the industry has raised no more than \$88,000 in previous Brotherhood drives, a sum that is far below what we, as an industry, ought to be able to raise.

One of the industry's objectives in this year's campaign is to have every theatre in the country obtain a minimum of ten memberships in the National Conference of Christians and Jews, sponsors of Brotherhood Week, at one dollar per membership. Such a quota is indeed low, and no exhibitor, no matter how small his operation, should find it difficult to achieve and even exceed this quota. Even if a minimum of ten dollars per theatre is raised, the total amount will set a new record.

HARRISON'S REPORTS again urges every exhibitor to give his fullest cooperation to this worthy fight against the forces of bigotry and intolerance.

"Nancy Goes to Rio" with Jane Powell, Ann Sothern, Barry Sullivan

(MGM, March; time, 99 min.)

A pleasing blend of comedy, romance and music, photographed in Technicolor. There is nothing really novel about the story, which has a youthful actress-mother and her 'teen-aged daughter vying for the attentions of the same man, but it should go over pretty well, for it is gay and lively, and the players enact their roles with zest. Moreover, the farcical complications as a result of misunderstandings will keep the audience chuckling throughout. Worked into the proceedings to good effect are a melange of tuneful song and dance numbers, featuring Jane Powell and the exuberant Carmen Miranda, whose antics and twisting of the English language add much to the entertainment values. The costumes and settings, enhanced by the Technicolor photography, are up to the usual MGM lavish standards:—

Ann Sothern, a famous stage actress, goes to Rio to study the leading part in a new play. Meanwhile the producer of the play, wanting a young girl for the lead, offers the part to Jane Powell, Ann's daughter and an aspiring actress. Unaware of her mother's intentions, Jane takes a boat to Rio to be coached by her. While sitting on the deck and studying the part, Jane speaks aloud a few lines from the play, giving Barry Sullivan, an attractive business man, the impression that she is a deserted wife who is going to have a baby. Sullivan, feeling sorry for her, tries to be nice, but she mistakes his kindness for a marriage proposal and turns him down. Arriving in Rio and discovering that her mother planned to play the lead, Jane secretly telephones the producer in the United States and cancels her contract. She then informs her mother that she had decided to give up the stage to marry Sullivan. Jane goes to Sullivan's office and informs him that she had decided to accept his proposal. Bewildered and still under the impression that Jane is to be a mother, Sullivan dispatches Carmen Miranda, his business partner, to Jane's home to inform her mother that she is to become a grandmother. Ann, jumping to the conclusion that Sullivan is the father, arranges a meeting to discuss marriage. The meeting results in a lot of double-talk with neither one aware of what is in the other's mind. Eventually, however, the misunderstanding is cleared up when Ann discovers that Sullivan had overheard Jane spouting lines from the play. By this time Ann and Sullivan fall in love, but Jane still imagines that he is in love with her. After several more mix-ups, Ann and Sullivan break the news of their engagement to Jane. The blow falls lightly, however, when Ann insists that Jane accept the lead in the play. It all ends happily with Jane's successful debut on Broadway.

It was produced by Joe Pasternak and directed by Robert Z. Leonard from a screen play by Sidney Sheldon, based on a story by Jane Hall, Frederick Kohner and Ralph Block. The cast includes Scotty Beckett, Louis Calhern and others.

"Mother Didn't Tell Me" with Dorothy McGuire and William Lundigan

(20th Century-Fox, March; time, 88 min.)

A humorous domestic comedy-drama, revolving around the trials and tribulations of the romantic bride of a busy young doctor. The story, which deals with the difficulties the heroine encounters in trying to adjust herself to the demands of her husband's profession, is episodic and offers nothing really outstanding, but it provides a number of amusing situations and, despite some dull spots, manages to keep one entertained. Worked into the story are angles involving a scheming mother-in-law and "another woman," but these miss fire because the motivations are weak. The dialogue and treatment are on the sophisticated side, and although everything is handled in good taste the picture is best suited for mature audiences:—

Attracted to William Lundigan, a young doctor, when she visits his office as a patient, Dorothy McGuire plays up to him, wins his love and marries him, despite a warning from his mother (Jessica Royce Landis) that the life of a doctor's wife is not an easy one. Actually, Lundigan's mother wanted him to marry Joyce MacKenzie, a medical student, who was to become his associate. Although happy, Dorothy finds it difficult to adjust herself to Lundigan's unpredictable hours, and on the advice of June Havoc, the

wife of another doctor, she decides to have a baby in the hope that Lundigan will then be induced to spend more time at home. Dorothy is blessed with twins, and for the next two years she finds her family life ideal. Complications arise, however, when Joyce graduates from medical school and arrives to take up her work with Lundigan. Dorothy, resentful, makes no secret about her feelings and gets into a violent quarrel with Lundigan; she decides to leave with the children. But before she can do so the mischievous twins swallow some ant paste and have to be rushed to the hospital. The children are saved, but the anguish caused by the accident serves to bring Dorothy and Lundigan's mother together on closer terms, with the latter confessing that, through Joyce, she had been trying to break up the marriage. She begs Dorothy's forgiveness and sees to it that Joyce resigns as Lundigan's associate. Dorothy embraces her mother-in-law and then rushes into Lundigan's arms, telling him that she would rather be neglected as a doctor's wife than live alone.

It was produced by Fred Kohlmar and directed by Claude Binyon from his own screen play, based on Mary Bard's book, "The Doctor Wears Three Faces." Adult fare.

"Chain Lightning" with Humphrey Bogart, Eleanor Parker and Raymond Massey

(Warner Bros., Feb. 25; time, 94 min.)

Revolving around a test pilot and dealing with the development of jet propelled planes, this thrilling aviation melodrama should go over well with most audiences, despite the formula story. The action is at its best in the sequences having to do with the testing of the jet planes. These are at once exciting and informative, staged in a way that imparts enough technical knowledge to stir the spectator's imagination. The depiction of the hero making a hazardous flight from Nome to Washington via the North Pole at an altitude of 80,000 feet and a speed of 1400 miles per hour grips one because of the realistic way in which it has been done, and because it gives one the feeling of impending tragedy. When the story gets on the ground, however, it is only mildly interesting, for the romantic triangle is developed along familiar lines and, despite the good acting, is lacking in emotional appeal. The special effects and the photography are excellent:—

The story opens in England in 1943 with Bogart, pilot of a Flying Fortress, showing Richard Whorf, an aircraft designer, what is wrong with the planes. In love with Eleanor Parker, a Red Cross worker, Bogart is separated from her when he is suddenly recalled to Washington. With the war over, Bogart runs into a streak of bad luck, failing at every job as he barnstorms around the country. He eventually meets up with an old Air Force buddy who invites him to a party given by Raymond Massey, a post-war opportunist making jet planes for the Air Force. At the party he meets again Eleanor, now Massey's secretary and Whorf's fiancée. Whorf himself was designing the jet plane for Massey. Although aware that the love between Bogart and Eleanor had been rekindled, Whorf persuades Massey to hire Bogart as test pilot. On his first assignment, Bogart and the jet plane perform brilliantly. Whorf, however, considers the plane unsafe pending the perfection of a life-saving pod that could eject the pilot from the cockpit in an emergency and bring him safely to the ground. Massey, seeking to get a quick Government order, refuses to go along with any delay and offers Bogart a fabulous bonus to fly the plane from Nome to Washington in record time. Whorf begs Bogart not to make the flight lest it be successful and the Government order planes that would seem be obsolete. Bogart ignores the plea and completes the spectacular flight, but upon landing in Washington he learns that Whorf had lost his life testing the pod himself. Eleanor, angered, refuses to have anything to do with Bogart. To vindicate himself in Eleanor's eyes, and to make amends to the dead designer, Bogart, contrary to Massey's orders, takes up the plane with the life-saving pod and puts it through a successful test. Eleanor embraces him as he lands.

It was produced by Anthony Veiller and directed by Stuart Heisler from a screen play by Liam O'Brien and Vincent Evans, suggested by a story by J. Redmond Prior. Suitable for the family.

"The Tattooed Stranger" with John Miles and Patricia White

(RKO, no release date set; time, 64 min.)

An interesting program murder mystery melodrama. It has all the excitement and suspense one generally associates with pictures of this type and, in addition, is enhanced by a documentary flavor by reason of the fact that all the action was shot against actual New York City backgrounds. The most absorbing part of the story has to do with the depiction of the crime detection methods employed by the police to track down the murderer. The players mean little at the box-office, but their performances are adequate. A love interest is worked into the plot, but it is of minor importance:

Assigned to investigate the murder of a woman found in a stolen car, police lieutenant Walter Kinsella and detective John Miles, his youthful aide, have as their only clues to her identity a marine corps emblem tattooed on her forearm, and broken arches and purple ink marks on her thumb, indicating that she had been a waitress. Miles, who had found several blades of grass in the murder car, learns from Patricia White, a pretty botanist, that the grass is of a similar type that had been grown in the Bronx. Doggedly pursuing the different clues, the two detectives, after visits to many restaurants and tattooing establishments, learns not only the woman's identity but also the name of a merchant marine sailor who had been her sweetheart, and who had supposedly been killed in action. Further investigation discloses that she had been a bigamist, and that she had been defrauding the Government of the insurance checks of several dead service men who had married her. The murder of a tattoo artist who had given the detectives information leads them to the discovery that the supposedly dead sailor sweetheart is very much alive, and that he had committed the murders to collect the insurance checks himself. Through clever detective work, and with the aid of Patricia, Miles tracks the killer to a tombstone cutting works in the Bronx, where he gets his man after an exciting battle.

It was produced by Jay Bonafield and directed by Edward J. Montagne from an original screen play by Phil Reisman, Jr.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Outside the Wall" with Richard Basehart, Marilyn Maxwell and Signe Hasso

(Universal-Int'l, March; time, 80 min.)

A pretty good crook melodrama. The fact that the story revolves around a \$1,000,000 armored car robbery gives it a timely angle and good exploitation possibilities because of the recent \$1,500,000 Brink holdup in Boston. Although the plot is inclined to run wild at times and some of the situations are incredible, these shortcomings are not serious enough to lessen the interest of those who enjoy pictures of this type. The first half, which concerns itself mainly with the hero's reaction to the outside world after a prison stretch of fifteen years, is slow but interesting. It picks up speed and excitement in the second half, where he becomes involved with the armored car robber and a group of mobsters seeking the whereabouts of the stolen money. The direction and acting are good, and the actual prison and Philadelphia backgrounds help to make some of the action realistic:—

After fifteen years in prison for the accidental killing of a guard in reform school, Richard Basehart, now thirty, is released. The hustle and bustle of the outside world bewilders him, and to find peace he obtains employment as a laboratory assistant at a private sanatorium in the country. Here he meets nurses Dorothy Hart and Marilyn Maxwell. He is attracted to Marilyn, but she offers him little encouragement, frankly admitting that she is interested only in wealthy sweethearts. When John Hoyt, a former cell-mate of Basehart's, comes to the sanatorium as a tuberculosis patient, Basehart recognizes him as the thug the police were seeking for a \$1,000,000 armored car holdup. Hoyt asks Basehart to deliver "hush money" to Signe Hasso, his ex-wife, and offers to pay him handsomely for his trouble. Basehart, with Marilyn on his mind, agrees. Signe, secretly working with a group of mobsters who wanted the money stolen by Hoyt, suspects that Basehart had been Hoyt's unidentified accomplice in the holdup. She arranges with

the gangsters to capture him and give him the third degree in a mountain hideout. But Basehart escapes and makes his way to the sanatorium. He is followed by the gangsters, who bribe Marilyn and kidnap Hoyt from his room. Learning what had happened, Basehart dismisses Marilyn from his life and takes Dorothy into his confidence. He finds in Hoyt's room a baggage check for the loot, gives it to Dorothy, and instructs her to deliver it to the police. He then heads for the mountain hideaway to rescue Hoyt. There, he is nabbed by the gangsters who has succeeded also in intercepting Dorothy. Bluffing his way, Basehart, for a cut, agrees to accompany one of the gangsters to claim the trunk with the loot. The gangsters prepare to kill him and Dorothy when he returns with the money, but the police, notified beforehand by Basehart, converge on the scene and arrest the criminals. Cleared by the dying Hoyt of complicity in the holdup, Basehart embraces Dorothy.

It was produced by Aaron Rosenberg and directed by Crane Wilbur from his own screen play, based on a story by Henry Edward Helseth.

Adult fare.

"The Third Man" with Joseph Cotten, Valli, Orson Welles and Trevor Howard

(Selznick Rel. Org., Feb.; time, 104 min.)

A superb thriller! Carol Reed, whose "Odd Man Out" and "The Fallen Idol" have distinguished him as one of the foremost motion picture producer-directors, can take a deserving bow for the brilliant job he had done on "The Third Man." It is a superior melodrama in every sense of the word, one that will be appreciated by all types of audiences. Exhibitors who are apathetic about British-made pictures needn't worry about this one because of the American stars who head the cast. As a matter of fact, it should prove to be one of the biggest box-office pictures of the year because of the excellent word-of-mouth praise that it is sure to receive. The writing, direction, acting, lighting, camera work and background music are excellent.

Set in post-war Vienna, where most of the action was shot on location, the story follows the bizarre experiences of Joseph Cotten, an American author, who comes to Vienna to visit his friend, Orson Welles, only to learn that he had been killed in a street accident. Cotten's curiosity is aroused by conflicting stories about how his friend had died, and he becomes even more upset when informed by Trevor Howard, head of the British military police, that Welles had been a worthless fellow, a penicillin racketeer whose activities had either killed or mentally maimed helpless children. He refuses to believe that his friend had been corrupt and, suspecting that he had been murdered, starts an investigation of his own, despite Howard's warning that he would get into trouble. He cultivates the friendship of Valli, a showgirl who had been in love with Welles, and through her learns that three men had carried Welles to the curb after he had been struck down. He meets two of the men but neither seems able or willing to identify the third man. After a series of events in which his life is endangered, Cotten discovers that Welles is alive, and that he had permitted another man to be buried under his name. He becomes convinced that Welles is no good and, despite Valli's pleas, agrees to help Howard capture him. Welles, led into a trap by Cotten, is finally killed after a hectic chase through the city's massive sewer system.

A brief synopsis cannot do justice to the many fascinating and exciting twists of the suspenseful story, the finely drawn characterizations, the subtle humor, and the extremely effective pictorial drama of the war-torn Vienna backgrounds. Particularly noteworthy is the background music played by a single zither, a new innovation that must be heard to be appreciated, for it interprets the action and sets the mood for the different scenes. The pursuit of Welles through the network of sewers is one of the most thrilling chase sequences ever filmed. All in all, it is a thoroughly satisfying motion picture.

Graham Greene wrote the story and the screen play. The picture is a David O. Selznick and Sir Alexander Korda presentation.

Morally, there are no objectionable situations, but the film seems best suited for mature audiences.

"Joe Palooka Meets Humphrey"
with Joe Kirkwood, Leon Errol
and Robert Coogan

(Monogram, Jan. 29; time, 65 min.)

A fine double-bill picture. As a matter of fact, it should take better with some audiences than any of the past pictures in the "Palooka" series. The story is mostly silly but mirth-provoking. The fight between Joe Kirkwood and Robert Coogan, a man of huge proportions, should provoke the most laughter. There is much laughter also in the sequences in which Leon Errol changes from one role to another—that of the manager of Kirkwood, and as Lord Cecil Poole, an English fight manager. The direction is good and the photography clear:—

Joe Kirkwood the heavyweight champion, and Pamela Blake go to a resort to spend their honeymoon. Their car is damaged en route and Robert Coogan, a huge dim-witted mechanic, repairs it but, because he guarantees his work for thirty days, follows them everywhere to be present in case the car went out of order again, annoying them no end. They lose all peace of mind when Leon Errol, Kirkwood's manager, joins them. Word soon gets around that the champ is at the resort and, before long, Kirkwood is tricked into accepting a match for a local benefit performance. When Kirkwood's opponent is hurt seriously in an altercation, Jerome Cowan, the injured man's manager, substitutes Coogan. Errol approves the match, but, realizing that Coogan's giant-like power is a menace to Kirkwood's professional standing, he poses as Lord Cecil Poole, an English fight manager, and assumes the management of Coogan so as to make sure that Kirkwood will not suffer a defeat. Cowan becomes suspicious and orders two of his henchmen to kidnap the imposter. Errol, however, escapes and manages to reach the arena in time to advise Kirkwood to keep circling around Coogan so as to make him dizzy. Coogan, feeling hungry as always, becomes wobbly, falls on his face, and is counted out. Thus Kirkwood wins the fight and is enabled to enjoy an uninterrupted honeymoon with Pamela.

Hal E. Chester produced it and Jean Yarbrough directed it from a story and screen play by Henry Blankfort.

Fine entertainment for the family circle.

**"Hoedown" with Eddy Arnold,
Jock O'Mahoney and Jeff Donnell**

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 64 min.)

There is only one word that could describe adequately this picture, but because I don't use such words, even though other reputable critics have used them, I leave it to the imagination of the readers to determine how poor this program picture is. Even children will be bored with it. Nobody loves a dumb hero, and Jock O'Mahoney, who proves himself in the end to be the hero, is given a stupid part. For this reason no one cares what fate befalls him. The story is inane, the direction poor, and the acting worse:—

Jock O'Mahoney, a handsome but none-too-bright movie actor, is dropped by his studio for loss of popularity while he is on a personal appearance tour in Smokey Falls, Tennessee. He finds himself broke and without a friend, and to make matters worse his personal appearance tour had been financed by his mother, who had mortgaged her home to raise the necessary money. He meets Jeff Donnell, a young and pretty reporter, who had been assigned to get the story of his rise and fall. Both run out of gas on a highway and ask for help at a farm owned by Eddy Arnold, a famous folk-song singer, who was preparing a hoedown and holding amateur tryouts for a hospital benefit. Carolina Cotton, Eddy's cousin, falls for O'Mahoney, and Eddy, thinking that the songs he had heard O'Mahoney singing in his pic-

tures were sung by himself, wires Fred Sears, an agent, to sign O'Mahoney. While driving to the farm, Sears is held up by three bank robbers sought by the authorities, and is compelled to take them to the farm as his associates. On the day of the hoedown and the try-outs, it is discovered that O'Mahoney can't sing. The identity of the bank robbers is discovered when they try to steal the money collected from the audience. A wild battle follows, and O'Mahoney, who was thought by everybody to be spineless, beats up the crooks. The wide publicity given to this feat causes the fans to clamour for O'Mahoney's return to the screen. Offers pour in, and in addition he receives a reward for capturing the robbers, enabling him to pay off the mortgage on his mother's home. At the finish he realizes his love for Carolina, while Jeff finds romance with Eddy.

It was produced by Robert Clark and directed by Ray Nazarro from a screen play by Barry Shipman. The cast includes Douglas Fowley, Don Harvey, Charles Sullivan and others.

Harmless for children.

**"The Palomino" with Jerome Courtland,
Beverly Tyler and Joseph Calleia**

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 75 min.)

Being a natural color picture, photographed by the Technicolor process, "The Palomino" should go over fairly well where wild horse pictures please, even though the color photography in the scenes themselves is poor. The story is trite and as such can hardly hold the spectator's interest. It is predominantly melodramatic, for the villains are vicious, and plan their villainous acts without any compunction. The horses look beautiful in color, and in one situation the action is somewhat thrilling. Jerome Courtland is a pleasing actor, and with a good story he ought to gain popularity. Beverly Tyler is so-so. Joseph Calleia is his usual self, and Roy Roberts is a good actor and formidable villain:—

Jerome Courtland, just starting out as a cattle buyers' relations man, runs into Joseph Calleia, a hand at Rancho Las Granadas, and is advised by him to meet Beverly Tyler, his beautiful boss, on the ground that she knows all the ranchers in the valley. Courtland introduces himself to Beverly and learns that the ranch is unprofitable, for after the death of her father her priceless palomino stallion, El Rey, had disappeared, and she could no longer breed prize-winning palominos. Duke, another good horse, is the only palomino left to her. Beverly suggests to Courtland that he meet Roy Roberts, an influential rancher, whom she looked upon as a friend. In reality, Roberts is a crook and is the one who had stolen El Rey to breed expensive palominos of his own. Roberts refuses to sell any cattle to Courtland out of fear that his crookedness might be discovered by him. During the loading of a number of colts by Roberts and his henchmen, one breaks loose and takes off. Courtland ropes the colt and breaks its neck. Beverly, believing that the dead colt was her Duke, orders Courtland off the ranch. Roberts, to confirm her belief, has Duke abducted. Convinced that Roberts is the man behind the nefarious doings, Courtland sets out with Calleia to find El Rey and Duke. They discover the horses and Courtland orders Calleia to ride back and inform Beverly. But Beverly will not believe him. Roberts discovers Courtland and a fierce fight ensues. Beverly, at last convinced, arrives in time to see the end of the fight, with Courtland victorious. The incident serves to draw Courtland and Beverly closer together, much to the joy of Calleia. With El Rey back in the fold, the future of the ranch is assured.

The picture was produced by Robert Cohn; it was directed by Ray Nazarro, from a screen play by Tom Kilpatrick.

Harmless for children, because the villains are bested in the end and virtue triumphs.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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COURT ORDERS DIVORCEMENT WITHIN THREE YEARS

The final decree in the Government's twelve-year-old anti-trust suit against the eight major film companies was handed down on Wednesday of this week by the New York Federal Statutory Court. Judges Augustus N. Hand, Henry W. Goddard and Alfred C. Cox signed the decree.

Under the terms of the decree, Loew's, 20th Century-Fox and Warner Brothers, the three remaining theatre-owning defendants, were ordered to divorce their exhibition operations from their production-distribution business within a period of three years. Paramount and RKO have already consented to divorcement decrees.

Within six months of the entry of the decree, each of the three theatre-owning defendants must submit to the Court a plan for the ultimate separation of its distribution and production business from its exhibition business. After the filing of such a plan, the Government will have three months in which to file objections thereto and propose amended or alternative plans to achieve the same result.

The Government and the three major defendants are given one year in which to submit respectively plans for divestiture of theatre interests other than those heretofore ordered to be divested, "which they believe to be adequate to satisfy the requirements of the Supreme Court decision . . . with respect to such divestiture." Both parties are given six months after the filing of such plans to file objections and propose amended or alternative plans.

The defendant-distributors and any distributing company resulting from the divorcement ordered are enjoined from engaging in the exhibition business, and the defendant-exhibitors and any exhibitor company resulting from the divorcement are enjoined from engaging in the distribution business, except that permission may be granted by the Court upon notice to the Government and upon a showing that any such engagement shall not unreasonably restrain competition in the distribution and exhibition of motion pictures.

Like Paramount and RKO, the three remaining major defendants are enjoined from selling any theatres to each other, or to Columbia, Universal and United Artists, the "Little Three" defendants.

During the three years allowed for divorcement, each of the theatre-owning defendants will be permitted to exhibit its own pictures in its own theatres on a non-competitive basis.

The Court did not provide for a mandatory arbitration system, but it authorized the defendants to establish a voluntary arbitration system under the American Arbitration Association.

For the purpose of securing compliance with the decree, and for no other purpose, the Court ruled that the Department of Justice, upon written request and notice to any of the defendants, shall have access to all books and records, and shall be permitted to interview officers and employees.

The decree also enjoins the defendants from continuing to engage in certain trade practices previously found to be illegal. Specifically banned are the fixing of minimum admission prices; the maintenance of a system of clearance; the granting of unreasonable clearance between theatres not in substantial competition; performing existing franchises or granting new ones, except to enable an independent exhibitor to compete with either an affiliated theatre or one owned by a circuit resulting from the divorcement; making or performing formula deals or master agreements; and conditioning the licensing of one picture upon the licensing of one or more other pictures.

The decree also directs the defendants to offer each of their pictures theatre by theatre and without discrimination.

The Court handed down a separate decree for the "Little Three" defendants in which is imposed the same restraints placed on the major defendants, except that they are not enjoined, as the Government requested, from acquisition of the theatres in the future.

Because of the fact that the decree was handed down just prior to our going to press, HARRISON'S REPORTS has not had sufficient time for a studied analysis. In subsequent issues, however, it will publish opinions from different exhibitor leaders and discuss in detail the different highlights that are of interest to all independent exhibitors.

SPYROS SKOURAS' VIEWPOINT ON THEATRE BUDGET CONTROL

20th Century-Fox Film Corporation
44 West 56th Street
New York 19, N. Y.

January 31, 1950

Mr. P. S. Harrison
HARRISON'S REPORTS
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York 20, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

I have read and digested your article GUIDE TO THEATRE BUDGET CONTROL in the January 14 issue, and I strongly believe that it is unjust and unfair to give the impression that only 25% of the total theatre budget is adequate for film rental.

In my opinion, a flat limit of this kind eventually would destroy the film producing and distributing companies, and naturally the theatre men would suffer.

You make quite a liberal allowance for other expenditures in the tables you present in your article. I think these allowances are too liberal because I have checked the items of Rent, Taxes and Insurance, Heat, Light and Power and find that they are higher than average.

When I state the opinion that the producing companies would be damaged greatly by such a limit, I have in mind the present costs of picture production and the more exacting public demand for good subjects, good stories and real quality in a screen framework properly conceived, planned and directed. You have been one of the most severe critics of any picture not containing these ingredients, but I know you would be one of the first to deplore any depreciation in quality of the boxoffice values.

I doubt whether there is any theatre of any type which can book first class motion pictures, including shorts, for the small percentage of gross that you stipulate, and there is no film company engaged in "A" production which can provide first class motion pictures for this kind of revenue.

As you know, I do not speak merely from the point of view of the producing and distributing companies, but as one you will credit with having the best interests of the whole industry at heart.

Moreover, I have spent more years as an exhibitor than in my present field, which also includes large responsibilities in connection with the operation of quite a large circuit of theatres.

Naturally, if my wish were father to my thought, I would prefer, if it were possible, for this business to operate on a basis whereby the film companies could afford to rent these pictures for as low as 25% of the gross including shorts, and the full program requirements, but unfortunately, present day costs do not permit this.

(Continued on back page)

"Three Came Home" with Claudette Colbert, Patric Knowles and Sessue Hayakawa

(20th Century-Fox, no rel. date set; time, 106 min.)

Based on Agnes Newton Keith's widely-read autobiographical book, "Three Came Home" is a stirring factual drama of the harrowing experiences undergone by herself, her husband and child, as well as 24 other wives, 45 white men and 11 children, as prisoners of the Japanese during the occupation of British North Borneo in the recent conflict. It is not, of course, a cheerful entertainment, but it has been presented so skillfully and with such conviction and realism that it grips one's attention throughout and keeps one gulping because of its emotional impact.

Covering the period from 1940 to the end of the war, the story is a heart-rending depiction of the anxiety, misery and grief suffered by the white colonists stationed in Sandakan as they awaited the Japanese occupation after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and later as they were evacuated to prison camps, with the men and women and children imprisoned separately. One feels keenly the heart-breaking partings between the men and their loved ones, each fearful of the fate in store for the other. Particularly realistic are the scenes of the prison camps in which the women and children, deathly ill most of the time, live in filth, hunger and degradation throughout their years of imprisonment. Several of the Japanese captors are shown as stern but humane, but a number of them are depicted as fiends, utterly heartless in their brutal treatment of the women. The bestial cruelties they subject the women to from time to time are enough to make one's blood curdle. Most of the action is so grim that the few light touches of comedy here and there come as a welcome relief. The closing scenes, where the imprisoned husbands and wives are reunited after being liberated by American and Australian troops, will bring tears to the eyes of even the most hardened spectator.

Every one in the competent cast performs excellently under the inspired direction of Jean Nugelesco. Claudette Colbert, as Mrs. Keith, the American wife of a British official, endows the role with understanding, sympathy and courage, turning in one of the finest performances of her career. Particularly noteworthy is the outstanding work of Sessue Hayakawa, as a stern but humane Japanese colonel. All in all, it is a powerful dramatic story, one that will impress itself indelibly on all who will see it.

Nunnally Johnson wrote the screen play and produced it.

Best suited for mature audiences because of the grim subject matter.

"Unmasked" with Raymond Burr, Barbara Fuller and Robert Rockwell

(Republic, January 30; time, 60 min.)

Just a minor program picture. It is a crime melodrama, one that would not be missed if it had never been made, for the contrived story is neither realistic nor convincing, and the treatment is totally lacking in originality. It has all the earmarks of "quickie," and it is doubtful if even the undiscriminating audiences will take an interest in the proceedings, for it offers little that is exciting. The direction and acting are no more than adequate:—

Raymond Burr, publisher of a scandal sheet, tricks gullible women into investing in his venture. Hillary Brooke, his latest conquest, who was married to Paul Harvey, once a top-flight producer, looks forward to divorcing her husband with expectations of marrying Burr. Harvey quarrels with Hillary and takes away the jewels he had given to her lest they find their way into Burr's hands. Burr, learning of Harvey's action, murders Hillary to destroy evidence of how much money he owed her, then cleverly pins suspicion for the crime on Harvey. Fearing that he will be charged with the murder, the aging producer goes into hiding. He falls prey to Norman Budd, a small-time crook who was secretly in the pay of Burr, and gives him the jewels to raise enough money to secure the services of a good lawyer. Meanwhile Barbara Fuller, Harvey's daughter by a previous marriage, starts a search for her father with the aid of detective Robert

Rockwell. Unable to stand the pressure when the police locate him, Harvey commits suicide. Budd, having possession of the jewels, offers to sell them to John Eldredge, a gangster, who agrees to buy them if Budd would help in a prison break planned for Eldredge's younger brother. Burr, learning of the planned break from Budd, informs the district attorney so as to appear like a good citizen. Forewarned, the prison officials kill Eldredge's brother when he attempts to break out. Eldredge, discovering the source of the leak, kills Budd and plots to get Burr. He kidnaps Barbara and, using her as bait, lures Burr to a seashore hideout. There, Eldredge plans to kill them both, thus avenging his brother's death and at the same time ridding himself of the only persons who knew that he had the jewels. But Rockwell, who had been trailing Barbara, arrives on the scene and, after a bitter fight in which Eldredge and Burr are killed, rescues Barbara.

It was produced by Stephen Auer and directed by George Blair from a screen play by Albert DeMond and Norman S. Hall, based on a story by Manuel Seff and Paul Yawitz.

Adult fare.

"Young Man with a Horn" with Kirk Douglas, Lauren Bacall and Doris Day

(Warner Bros., no rel. date set; time, 112 min.)

Centering around the rise and downfall of an outstanding trumpet player, "Young Man with a Horn" is a compelling drama, best suited for adult audiences. Kirk Douglas, whose first acting chore this is since his role as the prizefighter in "Champion," comes through with another fine performance as the jazz musician who lives only for his trumpet playing until an unfortunate marriage leads him into alcoholism. Much of the story's strong emotional punch is derived from his sensitive, pathetic portrayal. An outstanding feature of the film is the excellent trumpet playing of popular songs that is heard throughout the proceedings. This music is the work of Harry James, who is not seen on the screen, but Douglas' lip movements and fingering of the instrument is a perfect job of synchronization. Excellent work is turned in by Doris Day, as a sympathetic singer who gives Douglas his first break; Juano Hernandez, as a kindly Negro musician who teaches Douglas how to play the trumpet; and Hoagy Carmichael, as a piano player who becomes Douglas' pal. Lauren Bacall, as the sophisticated neurotic Douglas marries, overacts the part badly:—

As a youngster, Douglas is attracted to the music played by a colored band headed by Hernandez, who recognizes that the boy has talent and teaches him to play the trumpet. He separates from Hernandez at the age of twenty to take a job with a dance orchestra on the road. He becomes friendly with Hoagy Carmichael, the pianist, and Doris Day, the vocalist, who falls in love with him but realizes that his music was uppermost in his mind. Douglas loses his job when he insists upon playing the music as he feels it and not as it is written. After months of playing in cheap saloons, he goes to New York. There he finds Doris, now a headliner, who takes him to a small cafe where Hernandez and his band were playing. Hernandez, aging fast and no longer a great trumpeter, invites Douglas to play with the band. His brilliant playing is heard by Jerome Cowan, a famous band leader, who gives him a contract. Douglas soon becomes a star attraction, but he religiously goes to the small cafe every night to play with Hernandez and boost his fading morale. Doris introduces him to Lauren Bacall, a magnetic but neurotic girl, and before long their meeting develops into a frantic love affair, ending with their marriage. They live happily for the first few months until Lauren, tiring of Douglas, becomes restless. She leaves him after a violent quarrel. He takes to drink after the breakup, neglects his friends, and forsakes his music. Penniless and ill, he eventually lands in an alcoholic ward, where he is found by Hoagy and Doris. They nurse him back to health and get him to start life anew with his beloved trumpet.

It was produced by Jerry Wald and directed by Michael Curtiz from a screen play by Carl Foreman and Edmund H. North, based on the novel by Dorothy Baker.

Adult fare.

"Conspirator" with Robert Taylor and Elizabeth Taylor

(MGM, March; time, 87 min.)

Produced by MGM in England, this is a fairly interesting but tragic melodrama, revolving around a young bride's horror when she discovers that her husband, a British officer, is a secret Communist agent. The story is somewhat weak in that the characterization of the husband lacks proper motivation. Moreover, the part of the story that deals with his efforts to "liquidate" his bride because of her discovery is lacking in sufficient suspense. Elizabeth Taylor, as the bride, does very well in her first mature role, but Robert Taylor, as her traitorous husband, is handicapped by a role that lacks conviction. His suicide at the finish makes for an unhappy ending:—

Elizabeth, an American girl visiting England, falls madly in love with Taylor, a Major in the British Army, after meeting him at an elaborate ball. They marry after a whirlwind courtship, but before long Elizabeth's happiness is marred by Taylor's strange behavior every time he receives an unsigned postcard bearing a photograph of the Tower of London. At such times he immediately left home for the night, explaining that he had to visit a sick friend. Actually, Taylor was a Communist spy in the pay of the Soviet Government, to which he delivered top military secrets, and the postcards were a summons to a meeting. One day Elizabeth accidentally comes across a letter revealing Taylor as a traitor. Disillusioned and shocked, but still in love with him, Elizabeth makes him promise to quit the Party immediately. Instead, Taylor notifies the Party leaders that his wife now knew his secret, and asks for instructions. They direct that he kill his wife immediately. He arranges to take her on a hunting trip, during which he fires his gun at her, but the shot goes wild. He dismisses the shooting as an accident, but Elizabeth suspects the truth. Displeased at his failure, the Party leaders warn Taylor to either "liquidate" Elizabeth at once or prepare to lose his own life. He goes home to carry out the instructions, but Elizabeth escapes from him and returns later with his regimental colonel. Aware that she had turned on him, Taylor commits suicide. The colonel then informs Elizabeth that Army Intelligence had long been aware of Taylor's activities, and had planted fake information for him to transmit to the Russians. He asks, however, that she keep this information secret along with the true reason for his suicide, and to let the world believe that he had killed himself because she had left him.

It was produced by Arthur Hornblow, Jr., and directed by Victor Saville, from a screen play by Sally Benson, based on the novel by Humphrey Slater.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The Eagle and the Hawk" with John Payne, Rhonda Fleming and Dennis O'Keefe

(Paramount, May; time, 104 min.)

Although photographed in Technicolor, this western-type melodrama is only mildly diverting. The story, besides being flimsy, is too long drawn out and is developed in the main by dialogue instead of by action; for this reason one's interest lags. Moreover, the characterizations are trite and unbelievable. The picture has its quota of gunplay and fisticuffs, but in between such action moments the proceedings are rather dull. It may get by with those who are not too exacting in their demands, but discriminating movie-goers are likely to be less tolerant of its faults:—

In the development of the story, which takes place during the Civil War, Dennis O'Keefe, a Yankee spy captured by the Confederates, is rescued by John Payne, a Texas Ranger, who delivers him to the Governor of Texas. Both are assigned on a mission to investigate an army formed on the Mexican border by General Thomas Gomez for the purpose of fostering an attack on Texas in behalf of Juarez, the Mexican patriot. O'Keefe and Payne were to obtain evidence to prove to Gomez that the aid he was getting in the way of money and arms came, not from Juarez, but from the French, who were plotting to down Juarez and bring in Maximilian as emperor. On their way to Corrales, both men encounter

Rhonda Fleming and help her to repair her carriage, which had lost a wheel. Later they learn that she is the wife of Fred Clark, who was supplying the money for Gomez's army. In the events that follow, Payne obtains a job with Clark and breaks into a "forbidden" building where he discovers a huge supply of French arms hidden. He is almost caught, but Rhonda, by this time in love with him, helps him to escape. Payne heads for Gomez' camp to meet O'Keefe, who had gone there to talk to the General. Amazed by what they tell him about Clark, Gomez demands proof. Both men return to Clark's encampment, and while O'Keefe blows up the ammunition building Payne goes through Clark's files and obtains letters proving him to be an agent of the French. In the ensuing excitement Clark captures Payne, but O'Keefe comes to his rescue, sacrificing his life in the process. A gun duel takes place between Gomez and Clark, with both men dying. Rhonda, now free, heads for Texas with Payne.

It was produced by William H. Pine and William C. Thomas, and directed by Lewis R. Foster from a screen play he wrote in collaboration with Geoffrey Homes, based on a story by Jess Arnold.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Champagne for Caesar" with Ronald Colman and Celeste Holm

(United Artists, no rel. date set; time, 99 min.)

A mirthful comedy farce. It should go over well with all types of audiences because of the highly amusing ribbing it gives to radio and television double-or-nothing quiz shows. The satirical story is, of course, far-fetched, for no less than a \$40,000,000 prize hinges on the correct answer to a question, but those who are willing to stretch the imagination a bit should find the proceedings pleasantly funny and at times quite hilarious. Ronald Colman is smooth as the scholarly gentleman who wants to put an end to quiz shows by winning everything the sponsor owns. In contrast to Colman's quiet humor, the broad slapstick antics of Vincent Price, as the frantic soap tycoon and sponsor of the show, are extremely laugh-provoking, as are the tricks employed by Celeste Holm, a sort of "Mata Hari," hired by Price to upset Colman emotionally:—

Colman, whose chief interest in life is the pursuit of knowledge, lives with Barbara Britton, his sister. While watching a television quiz show with Art Linkletter, Colman, disgusted, calls him the forerunner of intellectual destruction in America. On the following day Colman applies for a job with a soap company owned by Vincent Price, but he fails to get the job when their personalities clash. He discovers, however, that Price's soap company sponsored Linkletter's quiz show, and decides to even matters. He shows up on the next show as a contestant and, after answering all the questions correctly, refuses to accept his winnings of \$160, insisting upon returning the following week to try and double the winnings. Linkletter accepts the proposition at the urging of the audience. For several weeks Colman keeps doubling his money and Price is delighted because of the resultant publicity and the increase in sales, but when the winnings reach a total of more than \$40,000 he becomes concerned and cancels the program. But the public's refusal to buy his soap compels him to resume the program. Colman continues to double his winnings, and when he reaches \$2,000,000 Price becomes frantic. He engages Celeste Holm to make Colman fall in love with her and then to drop him abruptly in the hope that the shock will muddle his mind. But the effort fails, and in due time Colman works himself up to the \$40,000,000 question, which, if answered correctly, would give him the soap company. The final program is staged in the Hollywood Bowl, where Colman, after having answered the most complex questions, misses when he is asked what his social security number is. It all ends happily, however, with Colman and Celeste heading for Las Vegas to be wed, accompanied by Barbara and Linkletter, who, too, had fallen in love.

It is a Harry M. Popkin production, produced by George Moskov and directed by Richard Whorf from a story and screen play by Hans Jacoby and Fred Brady.

Unobjectionable morally.

What alarms me about the item in the article "Film Rentals including shorts 25%" is that some gullible exhibitors around the country will jump at conclusions and accept this as a yardstick based upon thorough investigation. Whereas, in fact, it is an erroneous assumption.

Had you studied the actual facts before issuing this statement to see to what an extent production is entitled to profit, I think the conclusion would have been quite a different one. Your figures show the exhibitor is entitled to 10% of the gross and it is broken down enough to show that you have made somewhat liberal allowances, as I have said, on other expenditures. But no analysis is given as to the producers' overhead and I think that such a breakdown would show that 25% does not even pay the cost of his negative.

To be fair, I would suggest that the best way to correct the impression you have given is to solicit accurate information from a number of exhibitors in various sections of the country representing theatres of various types and sizes in a wide variety of communities, and including first and subsequent runs. In this way your readers would get an accurate picture and not a misleading one, as in your article of January 14.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely,
(signed) Spyros P. Skouras

SPS:GL

EAGLE LION NOW FINANCIALLY SOUND

In a recent talk with the trade press in Hollywood, William J. Heineman, Eagle Lion's vice-president in charge of sales, and William C. MacMillen, Jr., vice-president in charge of operations, stated that the financial condition of the company has never been any better.

Eagle Lion is now in a position to make any kind of satisfactory deal with independent producers for release of their pictures through its distributing organization, and the company soon will be able to produce some of its own pictures. To date, thirty-six independently produced pictures are on the company's 1950 release schedule, ten of which have been completed.

Mr. Heineman, in enumerating the outstanding pictures his company will release this year, said that he was confident that the weekly receipts will be far higher than they have been at any other time in the past.

The prosperity of a producing-distributing company is beneficial, not only to the company itself but also to every exhibitor, for it means a larger number of meritorious pictures to select from.

HARRISON'S REPORTS is glad that the future of Eagle Lion seems bright.

A NOTE TO SUBSCRIBERS

If you are a subscriber and you happen to receive a circular soliciting your subscription, please disregard it.

Every effort is made to exclude the names of subscribers from the list of exhibitors to whom circulars are sent, but the list is so large that, no matter how carefully the work is done, the name of a subscriber is sometimes included.

"Cry Murder" with Carole Mathews and Jack Lord

(Film Classics, January; time, 63 min.)

"Cry Murder" measures up as a mildly interesting program murder-mystery melodrama involving blackmail. Its only claim to distinction is that it was shot on location in New York City. Otherwise, the poorly constructed plot is never convincing, and it is given more to talk than to action. Moreover, the direction is ordinary and so is the acting. Most of the excitement occurs in the final scenes, where the villain, trapped by the police, shoots it out with them on the steps of New York's General Post Office building, but even this sequence has a ludicrous touch because of the fact that the background shows several policemen directing traffic, completely oblivious to all the shooting taking place within one hundred feet of them:—

Having given up her screen career to marry Eugene Smith, an aspiring young politician, Carole Mathews finds herself hounded by Howard Smith, her father-in-law, who disapproved of his son's marriage. Complications arise when Jack Lord, a second-rate artist, accidentally obtains love letters written to Carole by a former suitor and starts to

blackmail her. Her father-in-law becomes suspicious when Lord starts coming to Carole's home to collect his blackmail money. His efforts to instill doubt in his son's mind about Carole's fidelity bear fruit when Eugene overhears her making an appointment to meet Lord in his studio. Carole finds Lord drunk and, as she fights off his advances, Hope Miller, Lord's hot-tempered girl-friend, arrives. She throws a bottle at Lord, missing him but hitting Carole and knocking her unconscious. Regaining consciousness, Carole, in a daze, finds Lord murdered and notices some one in a checkered pair of trousers hurrying out of the room. Tom Ahearne, a private detective hired by Carole's father-in-law to trail her, enters the studio and, after hearing Carole's story, agrees to help her look for the killer. Meanwhile Eugene, having followed Carole to the studio, believes that she had committed the murder. To cover up for her, he "confesses" to the police and is arrested. In the events that follow, Carole discovers that the identity of the man with the checkered trousers is Harry Clark, a bartender, who had learned Lord's source of blackmail and had killed him to carry on the extortion himself. She reveals her findings to the police and helps them to set up an elaborate trap, whereby he meets his end in a gun duel with the police on the post office steps. Reunited with Carole, Eugene makes it clear that he will not permit his father to interfere with their marriage again.

It was produced by Edward Leven and directed by Jack Glenn from a screen play by James Carhartt and Nicholas Winter, based on a play by A. B. Shiffren.

Adult fare.

"Father is a Bachelor" with William Holden and Coleen Gray

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 84 min.)

A heart-warming comedy-drama, with considerable human interest. Set against an old-fashioned village background, and revolving around the conversion of a footloose, carefree young man into a family man with the responsibility of five orphans on his hands, the story is rather thin, but its human appeal and brand of comedy should entertain family audiences in small-town theatres. The more sophisticated big-city audiences, however, will probably find it too draggy and "sticky." There is considerable pathos in some of the situations, and William Holden's devotion to the underprivileged children, and his efforts to care for their needs, are the reasons for the strong human appeal. Parts of the story are silly; as for instance, Holden's being practically forced into agreeing to marry a middle-aged spinster in order to save the children from an orphanage. There is much comedy and some excitement in the sequence where Holden thrashes the town's wealthiest man for insulting the children:—

Holden, an entertainer in a fake medicine show owned by Charles Winninger, finds himself stranded in a small village when Winninger is arrested and sentenced to thirty days in jail. He decides to fish and rest until Winninger is released. Returning from a day on the river with a catch of fish, Holden comes across a family of five children who invite him to share his fish with them in their ramshackle cabin. Later he learns from 12-year-old Gary Grey, the eldest of the children, that their parents had died six months previously in a steamboat accident, a fact they had kept secret lest they all be sent to an orphanage. Gary pleads with Holden to pose as their "uncle" to prevent action by the authorities. Holden balks at the idea, but when Coleen Gray, a member of the school board, comes to investigate the cause of the children's absence from school, he comes to their rescue. This gesture begins his conversion into a family man, and he obtains a job to earn enough money to feed and clothe them. Pride in his new-found family impells Holden to give Frederic Tozere, the wealthiest man in town, a sound thrashing for calling the children "river-bottom trash." Tozere has him arrested for assault and battery. Coleen, by this time in love with Holden, bails him out. Clinton Sundberg, Tozere's lawyer, investigates Holden's background and, upon learning that he is not the children's uncle, uses the information to blackmail him into agreeing to marry one of his spinster sisters lest the children be sent to an orphanage. Meanwhile Winninger, released from jail, takes matters in hand. Through some sly doings he induces Holden's intended bride to toss a coin with Coleen for Holden's hand. Coleen wins, and she looks forward to becoming the mother of Holden's adopted waifs.

It was produced by S. Sylvan Simon and directed by Norman Foster and Abby Berlin, from a story by James Edward Grant, who collaborated on the screen play with Alleen Leslie.

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20TH CENTURY-FOX CHICAGO EXHIBITOR MEETING INTELLIGENT STEP FORWARD

To explore and discuss new methods of showmanship for increasing national attendance at the theatres, and to win new movie-goers, Spyros P. Skouras, president of 20th Century-Fox, announced this week that his company will hold a two-day showmanship and merchandising meeting at the Drake Hotel in Chicago, on March 8 and 9, to which more than two hundred leading exhibitors of the United States and Canada have been invited.

Invitations have been issued to a cross-section of representative exhibitors of large and small circuits and large and small independents, including regional and national trade leaders of Theatre Owners of America; Allied States Association; Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners; and the national trade press.

The company, which is defraying all expenses, including transportation, is hoping that every exchange area in the United States and Canada will be represented at the meeting, thus making it one of the largest and most diversified exhibitor gatherings ever to have been assembled by a film company under one roof.

Mr. Skouras stated that it is the intention of his company to present a definite plan at the meeting "for encouraging and re-vitalizing showmanship methods throughout the country, based on the problems and conclusions formed at the company's recent merchandising meetings which were held with theatre advertising heads."

The overall pattern of the Chicago sessions, said Mr. Skouras, will be an extension of the program involved in the company's "Clear Statement of Policy," announced last May, wherein it took cognizance of the importance of stimulating public interest in motion pictures to attract the greatest number of people to the theatres' box-offices.

The agenda will include discussions on showmanship; merits of saturation bookings; and institutional merchandising for the benefit of the individual exhibitor, as well as the industry as a whole.

Methods for attracting "new-found" audiences will be presented, and included in this category will be practical methods for building a future audience through children's matinees, student admissions, and other activities aimed at increasing youth attendance at the theatres.

Mr. Skouras made it clear that the Chicago conclave will not be a sales meeting, and that a discussion

of trade practices will be avoided, if possible. The purpose of the meeting, he said, is to present to the exhibitors a practical plan for increasing theatre attendance through showmanship and merchandising ideas compiled by the company as a result of the meetings held with the theatre advertising heads, and to give the exhibitors attending the Chicago sessions an opportunity to express their own ideas at an open forum.

In these days of declining box-office receipts, when the trend on the part of some producer-distributors as well as exhibitors is to economize and retrench, the action of 20th Century-Fox in sponsoring an exhibitor showmanship meeting, at great expense to itself, is indeed heartening and commendable. Competition for the public's amusement dollar is intense, and the need for new and practical ideas through which to sell the theatres and their attractions is greater than ever.

It is estimated that, of the 150,000,000 people in the United States, some 100,000,000 are potential movie-goers, but according to several distribution executives no more than thirteen to fifteen million people ever get to see a particular picture. That leaves a vast number of 85,000,000 from which to recruit new and "lost" movie-goers, and to bring them to the box-office will require constructive planning of a program aimed at widening public interest in motion pictures. And that is the objective of the Chicago meeting.

Spyros Skouras and the other able 20th Century-Fox executives are to be congratulated, not only for recognizing that showmanship, properly applied, is the essence of our business, but also for doing something positive about it. Both the exhibitors and 20th Century-Fox, as well as the industry as a whole, cannot help but benefit from this intelligent step forward.

REMBUSCH ALLIED'S NEW PRESIDENT

Truman T. Rembusch, head of the Indiana Allied unit, has been elected president of the national organization by the Allied board of directors at their mid-winter meeting in Washington, D. C., held on February 9 and 10. He succeeds William L. Ainsworth, of Milwaukee.

Abram F. Myers was again reelected as chairman of the board and general counsel.

Charles Niles, of the Iowa-Nebraska unit, was elected treasurer, succeeding Rembusch, and Irving Dollinger, of New Jersey Allied, was elected secretary, succeeding Niles. Stanley D. Kane, of North Central Allied, was reelected as recording secretary.

(Continued on back page)

"Stromboli" with Ingrid Bergman

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 81 min.)

Whatever success this picture will have at the box-office will depend mainly on the curiosity that has been aroused as a result of the wide publicity given to the scandalous affair between Ingrid Bergman, the star, and Roberto Rossellini, the director. As entertainment, it does have a few moments of distinction, but on the whole it is a dull slow-paced piece, badly edited and mediocre in writing, direction and acting. It is a vague, episodic character study of a despondent but not sympathetic woman, hardly of the type that will appeal to the general run of movie-goers, for it leaves one emotionally cold. It may, of course, do fairly well in the early runs because of the current interest in the Bergman-Rossellini scandal, but unfavorable word-of-mouth undoubtedly will hurt the picture's chances in the subsequent runs. Many local religious and civic groups throughout the country are opposing exhibition of the film because of the personal conduct of Miss Bergman and Rossellini. Whether or not an exhibitor should bow to this pressure is a matter he must decide for himself.

The story, which is set on the bleak, volcanic island of Stromboli, depicts Miss Bergman as a disheartened woman in a displaced persons' camp outside of Rome. To get out of the hated camp, she accepts the marriage proposal of Mario Vitale, a former Italian soldier, who yearned to return to his home on Stromboli, where he had earned a living as a simple fisherman prior to the war, and which he describes to her as a place of beauty. Arriving on the island, she finds it to be an ugly, barren wasteland, inhabited by primitive people who led a primitive existence. Having known a better, more civilized way of life, she makes no secret of her distaste for the island and its people. Her attitude provokes the resentment of the other villagers, who begin to look upon her as a woman of questionable morals because of her failure to adhere to time-honored traditions, and because of several compromising but perfectly innocent incidents. Her husband, having become the butt of unkind remarks by the villagers, beats her savagely. Despite her anguish, however, she grows to love her husband and in due time finds herself pregnant. But she resolves to flee from the island after a violent eruption of its active volcano causes havoc and destitution. She makes an unsuccessful play for the island's priest in an effort to get his help. Failing this, she succeeds in seducing a young lighthouse keeper, who gives her money and points out a mountain route over which she can get to another town to obtain passage to the mainland. The route takes her near the mouth of the volcano, where she falls unconscious after being overcome by the smoke and gasses. On awakening and finding the day bright and clear, she sees beauty in the island, becomes regenerated and, realizing that her place is with her husband, returns to him.

It is a choppy, synthetic story, not always understandable, and the characterizations are neither sympathetic nor believable. Except for Miss Bergman, all the other players are Italian, and considerable use is made of their native tongue. To the picture's credit is a fine sequence of an actual tuna fishing expedition. The eruption of the volcano is vividly depicted. The original screen play was written by Rossellini in collaboration with Art Cohn, Renzo Cesana, Sergio Amidei and G. P. Callegari. Strictly adult fare.

"The Astonished Heart" with Noel Coward and Celia Johnson

(Univ.-Int'l, February; time, 92 min.)

This British-made domestic triangle drama is entertainment chiefly for high-class audiences. The story, which revolves around the mental torment of a London psychiatrist who is torn between love for his understanding wife and his passionate desire for a vivacious blonde, has an unreal, theatrical quality, but those who enjoy polished performances and smart, intelligent dialogue may be willing to overlook the artificiality of the plot. Its reception by the rank and file is doubtful, for it is all talk and no action, and makes no concessions to mass appeal:—

Noel Coward, a famous psychiatrist, takes his professional work very seriously and lives quietly and affectionately with Celia Johnson, whom he had married twelve years previously. One day Celia meets by chance Margaret Leighton, an old school chum, a vivacious divorcee who believed in having a good time. She visits Celia's home and, when Coward, an austere fellow, pays little attention to her, she determines to captivate him. The opportunity presents itself when Celia is suddenly called out of town and Coward invites her to the theatre. She makes Coward fall in love with her and, much to her own surprise, finds herself sincerely in love with him. Returning home, Celia finds the affair well under way, but, realizing that he was torn between his deep affection for her and his passionate desire for Margaret, she suggests that he go away with Margaret and to come back to her only when he feels sure that he has gotten Margaret out of his system and can settle down properly. Coward and Margaret accept Celia's noble gesture, but soon after they go away together they do nothing but quarrel, chiefly because of Coward's insane jealousy. His attitude causes Margaret to tire of him rapidly. They separate, and Coward returns home, but he becomes a mental wreck, unable to concentrate on his work. He makes one last desperate effort to re-establish his relationship with Margaret when she returns to London, but she tells him that her love for him is dead. Frustrated and ashamed to face Celia, Coward commits suicide by leaping from the roof of his apartment building.

It was produced by Antony Daraborough, who co-directed it with Terence Fisher, from a screen play by Noel Coward.

Adult fare.

"Guilty Bystander" with Faye Emerson, Zachary Scott and Mary Boland

(Film Classics, January; time, 92 min.)

Patrons who enjoy suspense melodramas should find this one engrossing, despite the complex story. It is a well made production, capably directed and acted. The mood is grim and the action, at times, violent, but it grips one's attention because of the constant danger to the hero, a former policeman given to drink, who is sobered into quick action when his young son is kidnapped and used as a pawn by a gang of smugglers. The fact that the identity of the person responsible for the kidnapping is not revealed until the finish gives the plot an intriguing touch of mystery. Much of the action has been filmed against actual New York backgrounds, giving the proceedings a realistic qual-

ity. A highly exciting sequence is a chase through the subway, during which the hero and one of the villains barely escape being run down by the roaring trains. The photography is exceptionally good:—

Zachary Scott, an ex-cop and dipsomaniac, is employed as a house detective in a cheap hotel operated by Mary Boland. While sleeping off a drunken binge, Scott is visited by Faye Emerson, his divorced wife, who informs him that their young son had been kidnapped. She explains that the child was last seen with her brother, who, too, had disappeared, while on an errand for Jed Prouty, a shady doctor. Scott hurriedly visits Prouty, only to be drugged by him. Later Prouty is found murdered, and Scott, picked up by the police in a dazed condition, is charged with the killing. But Sam Levene, head of the homicide bureau and an old friend, releases him after Faye provides an alibi. Assembling numerous clues, Scott deduces that the murdered doctor was involved in a diamond smuggling deal, and that he could find his son if he could learn the identity of a mysterious person known as "Saint Paul." Miss Boland, a shrewd woman long intimate with underworld characters, sends Scott to J. Edward Bromberg, a big-time smuggler, for help. He receives no cooperation from Bromberg, but while visiting him he meets Kay Medford, a woman of loose morals, whom he tricks into revealing the whereabouts of his brother-in-law, held captive by Bromberg. He heads for the hiding place, only to be intercepted and shot down by two of Bromberg's henchmen. He manages to move about despite his injuries and, after a series of incidents, finds Bromberg murdered. Another clue, however, leads him back to Miss Boland's hotel. There he finds his son and his brother-in-law, and discovers that "Saint Paul" is none other than Miss Boland herself, and that she had engineered the kidnapping of his son to compel Faye's brother to turn over a package of jewels entrusted in his care by Prouty. Scott brings about her arrest, rejoins the police force, and becomes reconciled with Faye.

Joseph Lerner directed the picture and co-produced it with Rex Carlton, from a screen play by Don Ettlinger, based on the novel by Wade Miller. Edmund L. Dorfman was executive producer.

Adult fare.

**"The Yellow Cab Man" with Red Skelton,
Gloria DeHaven, Walter Slezak,
Edward Arnold and James Gleason**

(MGM, April; time, 85 min.)

A good slapstick comedy, fast-paced and packed with situations that should garner a rich harvest of laughs. As a zany inventor who is swept up in a series of comic and melodramatic episodes when he becomes a cab driver, Red Skelton is cast in a part that gives him ample opportunity to display his comedy talents to the fullest, and he does a standout job. The manner in which he gets himself involved in all sorts of whacky complications is highly hilarious, and for the most part his antics will be greeted with howls of laughter, even though the story makes little sense. If "The Fuller Brush Man" clicked with your patrons, this comedy, too, should go over with them in a big way.

There are so many complications to the nonsensical

but amusing story that it defies synopsis. Briefly, however, it has Skelton as a sort of "Rube Goldberg" inventor who is always becoming involved in accidents. He becomes acquainted with Gloria DeHaven, an insurance adjuster for a taxicab company, who, after learning that he had invented unbreakable glass for windshields, arranges for him to demonstrate the invention to the president of the company. But Edward Arnold, an ambulance-chasing lawyer, learns of his invention, too, and he immediately puts into operation a plan that causes the demonstration to prove a failure, thus giving him time to try and gain control of it himself. Shortly thereafter, Skelton, with the aid of Gloria and of James Gleason, is given a job as a cab driver with the company. He gets himself into all sorts of jams with the passengers on his first day. Meanwhile Arnold, unable to duplicate the sample of glass he had managed to steal from Skelton, resorts to another plan: He frames him on a fake accident charge, hoping that he will settle the suit by revealing the formula for making the unbreakable glass. Before long Skelton becomes involved in a series of mad events as a result of the machinations of Walter Slezak, a fake psychiatrist, and Jay C. Flippen, a thug, both Arnold's henchmen, and to add to his woes they frame him for a murder committed by Arnold. He discovers Arnold's guilt, however, and from then on the proceedings turn into slapstick in its broadest form, with bedlam breaking loose as Skelton and Gloria are pursued through a huge exhibition hall containing a home furnishings show. It all ends well when a fleet of taxicabs and their drivers, summoned by Gleason, converge on the exhibition hall and capture the villains.

It was produced by Richard Goldstone and directed by Jack Donahue from a story by Devery Freeman, who collaborated on the screen play with Albert Beich.

Fine for the entire family.

A TEST OF SHOWMANSHIP

Abram F. Myers, Chairman of COMPO's Committee on Taxation and Legislation, issued the following statement this week, under the above heading:

"The campaign against the federal admission tax has served to emphasize the importance of showmanship in all theatre operations.

"The response has been much greater than the Committee anticipated but an analysis of the returns shows a considerable fluctuation in the number of petitions signed among theatres of comparable size, location and attendance.

"This indicates clearly that the enthusiasm, efficiency and showmanship of the exhibitor or theatre manager is an important factor in the results attained.

"Where the tables are properly placed, the posters prominently displayed and attendants are on duty at the proper times, many more petitions are signed than in the theatres where the effort is made in a perfunctory manner.

"This campaign, like any other exploitation campaign, calls for a genuine showmanlike whirl. There is a lesson here for the future and it is hoped that it will serve not only to further intensify the tax campaign, but will be applied to all theatre activities."

The actions taken by the Allied board included ratification of the organization's participation in the Council of Motion Picture Organizations; authorization of the formation of a committee to gather information from all Allied territories on competitive bidding, and to investigate charges that the bidding system is being used by some distributors in discriminatory ways; authorization for the standing committee headed by Col. H. A. Cole, of Texas, to meet with distributor sales managers to protest against violations of their promises on percentage pictures, and to propose that flat rental deals be granted to more theatres than at present; and authorization for a committee to appear before the Federal Communications Commission to ask for special theatre television frequencies.

Authorized also was the setting up of a central "anti-trust" library to serve counsel for independent exhibitors—whether members of Allied or not—engaged in anti-trust litigation against the major companies. This library, which probably will be set up in Washington, will contain complete information on all industry anti-trust cases, and one of its chief uses will be to keep the lawyers of independent exhibitors informed of the inconsistent positions taken by major company lawyers in their defense of anti-trust suits.

Another action taken by the board was the adoption of a strongly worded resolution condemning RKO for marketing the picture "Stromboli," and terming the company's advertising and exploitation campaign as "sensational and debased, knowingly calculated and designed to take greedy and reprehensible advantage of shamefully immoral conduct." The resolution urged exhibitors to "refuse to buy or exhibit this picture and all pictures produced and released under like or similar circumstances."

In his annual report to the Allied board, Mr. Meyers said that the future looks bright for the independent exhibitor but warned that he must not sit back and rely on court decisions and legal documents to protect himself in his dealings with the distributors. Constant vigilance and strong organization is needed, he said, if the exhibitors are to reach the ultimate goal of a free and open market for films.

With pictures no longer moving in fixed channels, he continued, "the distributors are beginning to revive the lost art of salesmanship. The independent exhibitors are receiving more consideration than they have in many years, and the end is not in sight. We look forward with confidence to the day when the playing time on every screen will be at least as important to the distributor with a picture to sell as that particular feature is to the exhibitor."

Pittsburgh was selected by the board for the 1950 national convention, to be held on October 2-4.

THE KATZMAN CORPORATION

1422 LYMAN PLACE
HOLLYWOOD 27, CALIF.

February 3, 1950

Mr. Pete Harrison, Editor
HARRISON'S REPORTS
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York 20, N. Y.

Dear Pete Harrison:

The review of our picture, MARK OF THE GORILLA, which appeared in your paper dated January 31, has been called to my attention.

It is needless to say that it is not only upsetting to those of us who worked on the picture to read a review such as you have written, but it is unfair for exhibitors to judge a picture on the basis of that review.

We are certain you realize every picture that is made is not intended for Radio City Music Hall, nor is it a contender for an Academy Award. There are definite audiences, not only in this country but throughout the world, who very much appreciate a film such as we have produced in "Mark of the Gorilla." For example, I quote an excerpt of a letter written by an exhibitor, Mrs. Pat Murphy of the Queen Theatre in Holliday, Texas, which is currently printed in the January 28th edition of *Boxoffice*, as follows:

"The kids all welcomed Johnny Weissmuller back. He's still Tarzan to them, with clothes on. This is very well made, has good animal shots and the clever crow's antics were well received. Played Fri., Sat. Weather: Fair—Mrs. Pat Murphy, Queen Theatre, Holliday, Texas. Oil field patronage." (*Editor's Note: Mrs. Murphy's remarks refer to the picture "Jungle Jim," which HARRISON'S REPORTS termed "very good entertainment" in its review published December 25, 1948.*)

Apparently it is pictures like these that keep exhibitors like Mrs. Murphy in business.

We must call your particular attention to your remark, "The film libraries are full of such stock shots. . . ."

You might be interested to know that the stock material you saw in the beginning of this picture has never been seen on a theatre screen before, and there is a complete story in itself describing how we were able to secure that particular stock material.

Desiring to give the public jungle footage that they had never seen before, we made an extensive search to uncover different and unusual jungle and animal film. By virtue of reading an old Sunday supplement which described the explorations of a wealthy building contractor who makes his home in Lubbock, Texas, we were successful in securing some of his prize collection footage that he himself photographed in Africa on a safari that he recently led. The school system of Texas thought so much of the jungle film that the contractor has given it to them for educational purposes.

So again let me say that such effort as we have made, while not apparent to you—at least as evidenced by your review—might be apparent to keener observers. Upon closer observation I think you will find that the crooks, while fewer in number than the rangers, met their just due as a result of gunfire—and only two of this group survived.

We have taken the trouble to write this extensively only because we think it is an injustice to the subscribers of your paper who undoubtedly rely largely on what they read as to what pictures they book. In order to maintain some degree of perspective, we think whomever you delegate to write these reviews should bear in mind that different pictures are made for different audiences, and that such sweeping statements of criticism as are included prove very damaging, not only to those whom it concerns, but to the very integrity of the paper in which it appears.

Very truly yours,
THE KATZMAN CORPORATION
SAM KATZMAN
President

(signed)

sk:my

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1950

No. 8

THE TAX CAMPAIGN

Appearing before the House Ways and Means Committee on Tuesday of this week, Abram F. Myers, chairman of COMPO's tax committee and General counsel of National Allied, and Gael Sullivan, executive director of Theatre Owners of America, presented the industry's arguments for repeal of the 20 per cent Federal tax on admissions.

In a twenty-two page brief filed with the Committee, Myers and Sullivan stressed the fact that the motion picture business is mainly small business, and that the tax is not a tax on Hollywood. "We make this distinction," they said, "because over-enthusiastic reporting has attributed to Hollywood a degree of glamor and opulence which cannot by any possibility be applied to the exhibition branch. In investment and numbers employed, Hollywood represents only a small segment of the industry."

The brief presented the following seven-point argument against the tax:

1. The admission tax is an emergency tax and should not become part of the permanent tax structure.

2. Motion pictures are a part of the press and should be accorded equal treatment with books, magazines and newspapers.

3. Moving pictures are an integral part of American life, a necessity, not a luxury.

4. The admission tax as applied to motion picture theatres is primarily a tax on the lower and middle income groups—only a small part of it is paid by the well-to-do.

5. A great majority of the theatre owners, those who are immediately affected by the tax, are small business men, not to be confused with the over-publicized "movie magnates."

6. Due to declining attendance at theatres, the admission tax as applied to theatres is an uncertain revenue source for budget balancing purposes.

7. The admission tax as applied to motion pictures threatens the existence of the country's greatest peacetime entertainment medium, which also is an indispensable part of the Government's communications system in time of war.

Both in the brief and in their appearance before the House Committee, Mr. Myers and Mr. Sullivan have done a fine job in presenting the industry's case, and they deserve the sincere thanks of every one in the industry for their tireless efforts, but even their effective arguments are not nearly enough if the industry is to win this battle. The most powerful weapon the

industry has in this tax fight is public support, and it is on this that we must concentrate our efforts mainly.

We must bear in mind that many other businesses are affected by the excise taxes now in existence, and that each of them, through competent spokesmen, are putting up effective arguments as to why it should be given relief. We must bear in mind also that the country's colossal spending program does not permit the complete elimination of all the excise taxes, and this means that only certain businesses will be favored either by elimination or reduction of the tax now imposed on their operations.

Only Congressmen and Senators have the power to impose or eliminate taxes. Frequently, political considerations motivate their decisions, and you may be sure that in the case of the admissions tax they will be subjected to considerable pressure from the Administration, which has given every indication that it wants to keep this tax intact. But the one thing that invariably will make a Congressman or Senator sit up and take notice, despite political pressure, is a deluge of protests from their constituents—the people who elect them to office. For this reason we must concentrate our efforts on winning the public's support.

Unlike most of the other businesses that are seeking relief from the excise taxes, the motion picture business is in the envious position of coming in direct contact with the millions of movie-goers who pay the admissions tax. Consequently, no other business is in as good a position to influence the public's opinion, gain their support, and provide them with facilities to register their protests.

Many exhibitors have done an outstanding job thus far in getting their patrons to sign the protest cards provided by COMPO through National Screen Service, but according to several reports a great number of exhibitors have fallen down on the job. For instance, Sidney Samuelson, general manager of Allied Theatre Owners of Eastern Pennsylvania, charges in his current organization bulletin that a vast majority of the exhibitors in his territory "are sitting back, taking it easy and expecting that 'George' will do it." It is this laxity on the part of many exhibitors that no doubt motivated Mr. Myers to issue a statement last week to the effect that there is a considerable fluctuation in the number of petitions signed among theatres of comparable size, location and attendance. "This indicates clearly," he said, "that the enthusiasm, efficiency and showmanship of the exhibitor is an important factor in the results attained. Where the tables are properly placed, the posters prominently displayed and attendants are on duty at the proper times, many more petitions are signed than in the theatres where the effort is made in a perfunctory manner."

(Continued on back page)

**"Stage Fright" with Jane Wyman,
Marlene Dietrich and Richard Todd**

(Warner Bros., April 15; time, 110 min.)

Produced in England, this latest Alfred Hitchcock picture is a rambling murder thriller that wavers constantly between comedy that is delightfully funny and melodrama that is rarely more than moderately exciting. The overall result is a spotty entertainment that is too dragged out to keep one's interest constantly alive. The main trouble with the picture lies in the improper development of the involved plot, which is given to wordy situations that slow down the action considerably, and which is not always logical. The performances are competent, the characterizations interesting, and there are individual scenes that reach high points in comedy and suspense, but on the whole the picture lacks the touch that makes for sustained fascination:—

The story opens with Richard Todd, in a desperate plight, enlisting the aid of Jane Wyman, his girlfriend, a student at a dramatic school. He informs her that the police suspected him of murdering the husband of Marlene Dietrich, a musical comedy star, who had committed the deed herself, but that he had become involved in an effort to help her cover up the crime. Jane, in love with Todd and believing him innocent, offers to hide him out at her father's lodge and, despite the warnings of her father (Alastair Sim) not to become involved herself, decides to do a little investigating to clear Todd of suspicion. She becomes mixed up in all sorts of complications as a result of a chance meeting with Michael Wilding, a Scotland Yard detective assigned to the case. In the events that follow, she makes a deal with Marlene's maid to take over her job, and she soon finds herself in a continuous round of predicaments because of her efforts to keep Marlene from discovering that she knew Todd. To add to her troubles, she falls in love with Wilding, who had no idea of her connection with Todd. In due time, however, her activities become known to Wilding, and she is shocked no end when he proves to her that Todd had really committed the murder himself. Taking advantage of her friendship with Todd, Wilding employs Jane to trap Todd in an empty theatre, where he meets accidental death on the stage after a hectic chase.

It was produced and directed by Mr. Hitchcock from a screen play by Whitfield Cook, based on a novel by Selwyn Jepson. Adult fare.

**"The Vicious Years" with Tommy Cook,
Gar Moore and Eduard Franz**

(Film Classics, March; time, 79 min.)

Powerful entertainment. It is a drama with regeneration as the theme—the regeneration of a filthy young hoodlum of fourteen, a blackmailer. There are situations that will make one's eyes swell with tears, such as where the young hoodlum refuses to give away the murderer, the son of the man who had befriended him. Other deeply emotional situations are those in which Eduard Franz's family, with the exception of the son, are kind to the young blackmailer and show a sincere desire to make a man out of him. Tommy Cook is excellent as the youngster who becomes regenerated. His responsiveness to kindness, and the fine traits he displays in the end, are inspiring. He is convincing at all times, as are all the others in the little known but competent cast. The direction is highly skillful. The photography is good:—

Tommy, a homeless and rugged hoodlum in a post-war Italian city, sees Gar Wood, son of a noble but impoverished family, murder a man from whom he

had borrowed money. He traces Gar to his home, reveals his knowledge of the murder, and demands that he be permitted to live there as his price for silence. Franz, Gar's father, accepts Tommy so as to protect his son. He buys Tommy clothes to make him look respectable. The youngster lives there unwanted and hated by Gar, but Sybil Merritt, Gar's young wife, and Marjorie Eaton, Franz's gently demented sister, treat him kindly. Eventually Franz begins to feel fondness for the boy who, hungry for family love, drops his hardness and defiance. Police Lieutenant Anthony Ross, unable to understand what prompted Franz to take a hoodlum into his home, questions him. Franz gives him a reasonable motive and informs him that he planned to adopt Tommy legally. But when Tommy learns that Franz had no intention of adopting him, he becomes embittered and accosts Gar's wife, for which act Gar beats him unmercifully. Deciding to rid himself of Tommy, Gar sets out on a new approach: He feigns regret over the beating he had given him, lulls the boy into a false sense of security, and then proposes that they celebrate their new-found friendship with a trip to the seashore, where he will teach Tommy how to swim. Gar hires a rowboat, and after rowing a distance from shore, punches a hole in the boat and leaves Tommy to drown, while he swims ashore. Gar's report that Tommy had drowned accidentally is dispelled when word comes that he had been rescued by fishermen. Ross, suspecting foul play, questions Tommy, but the lad, bound by his loyalty to Franz, refuses to say anything. But Franz, realizing that his son had killed one man and had attempted to murder another, tells Ross the truth. Tommy, feeling that he had caused Franz's household much unhappiness, decides to go away, but Franz, now deeply attached to the boy, persuades him to return.

It was produced by Anson Bond and directed by Robert Florey from a story and screen play by M. Richard Nash. Suitable for the family.

**"The Kid from Texas" with Audie Murphy,
Gale Storm and Albert Dekker**

(Univ.-Int'l, March; time, 78 min.)

Photographed in Technicolor, this is a fairly good Western melodrama. Its appeal, however, will be directed mostly to the avid followers of pictures of this type, for the story, which is another version of the exploits of Billy the Kid, the famed young outlaw, is cut from a stereotyped pattern and offers little that is novel. But the story's deficiencies probably will be overlooked by the Western fans, for the action has more than a fair share of thrills and dangers, with plentiful hard-riding and fierce gun-fighting. Audie Murphy, as "Billy," gives a sensitive portrayal. Ethically, however, the picture is questionable, for it glamorizes an outlaw and makes him out to be appealing and sympathetic:—

The story, which takes place in 1880, depicts the ranch country in New Mexico in a state of turmoil, with the leading landowners battling for control of the range. On one side is Dennis Hooey, while the rival forces are led by Albert Dekker and his partner, Shepperd Strudwick. When four of Hooey's henchmen raid the offices of Dekker and Strudwick, both are saved from harm by Audie Murphy, an 18-year-old drifter, who disarms the attackers and routs them. Strudwick takes a liking to Audie and gives him a job on the ranch, despite Dekker's misgivings. Dekker's dislike for Audie is increased when Gale Storm, his youthful wife, is attracted to the lad. When a group of Hooey's men raid the ranch and kill Strud-

wick, Dekker orders the ranch hands, including Audie, to go after the killers. This sets off a range war that becomes so serious that Robert Barrat, the territory's military governor, intervenes. Dekker shifts the blame for his part in the affair on Audie, whom he accuses of acting on his own, and to show his good faith he offers a reward for Audie's capture, dead or alive. Embittered at Dekker and still determined to avenge Strudwick's death, Audie spurns Barrat's plea to surrender and begins a career of outlawry in which he is joined by other adventurous young men. One day, as Audie and his men raid Dekker's ranch to replenish their supplies, they are trapped by the sheriff and his deputies. A bloody siege begins, during which time Gale learns that her husband was responsible for making Audie an outlaw. Dekker and all of Audie's men die in the battle, but Audie himself manages to escape. But his freedom is shortlived, for in due time he, too, is shot to death by the sheriff, when he is trapped while risking a meeting with Gale.

It was produced by Paul Short and directed by Kurt Neumann from a screen play by Robert Hardy Andrews and Karl Lamb, based on a story by Mr. Andrews.

Children will probably enjoy it, but it is not a picture for them.

"Captain Carey, U.S.A." with Alan Ladd and Wanda Hendrix

(Paramount, April; time, 83 min.)

A fair enough post-war adventure melodrama that should satisfy the Alan Ladd fans, for he is cast in the type of role that suits his rugged, tight-lipped personality. But, like numerous other pictures in which Ladd has been starred, the success of this one will depend on his popularity, for the story leaves much to be desired; it is complicated and confusing. The good direction, however, has succeeded to a great extent in covering up the plot's strange confusions and aimless wanderings with an effective melodramatic mood, and for that reason the picture should pass muster with the uncritical:—

Alan Ladd, an American OSS officer working behind the lines in Italy during the war, makes his hideout in the cellar of an island palace owned by a noble family, whose daughter, Wanda Hendrix, aided him. The hideout is discovered by the Germans, who shoot and capture him after a bloody battle. Four years later, after victory, Ladd, now a civilian, passes an art gallery in New York and recognizes a painting he had last seen in the hideout. He deduces that the man who smuggled the painting out of Italy was the one who had tipped off the Germans, and he decides to return and track down the betrayer. Arriving in Italy, he is shocked to find Wanda still alive and married to Francis Lederer, a politically ambitious baron. Each believed the other dead. To add to his chagrin, he finds the villagers, former friends, now hostile to him, because they held him responsible for the killing of 27 partisans on the night he was captured. Efforts are made by several people to make him return home, but he remains determined to stay and find the betrayer. Aided by Wanda, he starts an investigation that brings about several mysterious murders of people who might have helped him, as well as a number of attempts on his own life. Matters become complicated when a false rumor spreads among the villagers that Wanda herself was the betrayer. In his efforts to protect Wanda, Ladd discovers that Lederer is the culprit. The climax has both men battling it out to the death in the cellar

of the palace, with Lederer losing his life. His mission accomplished, Ladd prepares to return to the United States, but he indicates to Wanda that he will soon return for her.

It was produced by Richard Maibaum and directed by Mitchell Leisen from a screen play by Robert Thoeren, based on a novel by Martha Albrand.

Unobjectionable morally.

"No Man of Her Own" with Barbara Stanwyck and John Lund

(Paramount, May; time, 98 min.)

Although well acted and directed, this adult melodrama is not impressive. The story's combination of mistaken identity, deception, blackmail and murder is so far-fetched, and the happenings so obviously contrived, that one feels as if the author stretched his imagination to the breaking point to invent the situations. As a destitute, unmarried mother who, through a fantastic series of events, is accepted by a kindly well-to-do couple as their widowed daughter-in-law, Barbara Stanwyck manages to give some interest and importance to the involved and over-dramatic plot, but even her valiant efforts are not enough to overcome the feeling that there is nothing real about the proceedings. It is not a pleasant entertainment, but its "soap opera" flavor may appeal to the women:—

Barbara, discarded by Lyle Bettger, the father of her unborn child, boards a train for San Francisco. En route she makes friends with Richard Denning and his wife, Phyllis Thaxter who, like Barbara, was seven months pregnant. Both were on their way to meet his parents (Jane Cowl and Henry O'Neill), who had never met Phyllis nor seen a picture of her. Disaster strikes when the train is wrecked and Phyllis and her husband lose their lives, their bodies mangled beyond identification. Barbara survives the crash and regains consciousness in a hospital, where she learns that a son had been born to her prematurely, and that she had been registered under Phyllis' name through a mistake in identity. She decides to continue her new identity for the welfare of her baby. Released from the hospital, she journeys to the home of Miss Cowl and O'Neill, who welcome her as their daughter-in-law. John Lund, their other son, is delighted to have her with them, and soon falls in love with her. Barbara's happiness proves only temporary when, after many months, Bettger makes an appearance and starts to blackmail her lest he reveal her deception. So as not to disillusion those who had learned to love her, Barbara manages to raise the money he demands, but she balks when he insists that she marry him so that he might cash in on any inheritance that is left to her. Desperate, she determines to kill Bettger, but she finds him murdered by someone else before she can commit the crime. By this time Lund, having learned of her troubles with Bettger, goes to her aid. He finds her with the body and helps her to dispose of it lest the crime be pinned on her. The shock of what happened brings about the death of Miss Cowl, but before she dies she leaves a note confessing that she had murdered Bettger so that Barbara would be in the clear. Barbara refuses to let Lund make the confession known to the police. Months later, after Bettger's body is found, they learn from the police that the killing had been confessed by Carole Mathews, a blonde Bettger had discarded. Barbara and Lund decide to keep her past secret, and to start life anew.

It was produced by Richard Maibaum and directed by Mitchell Leisen from a screen play by Sally Benson and Catherine Turney, based on a novel by William Irish. Adult fare.

The exhibitors who are not doing their share in this tax battle will do well to remember Mr. Myers' admonition that, unless the industry makes an all-out effort to secure repeal of the admission tax at this session of Congress, and succeeds, the industry is doomed to remain the victim of discriminatory taxes, and a target for additional ones.

Theatre attendance has been declining steadily, and if we can rid ourselves of this obnoxious tax it may very well prove to be the shot in the arm our business needs. Now is no time to either shirk or relax in the battle to repeal the admission tax. If anything, our efforts must be intensified.

THE BUSINESS DECLINE

In their brief presenting the industry's case to the House Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Myers and Mr. Sullivan, to offset the Treasury Department's estimate that the admission tax would bring in approximately \$395,000,000 in the 1951 fiscal year, which is about ten million dollars more than is hoped for in the current fiscal year ending in June, brought out the fact that there has been an alarming decline in theatre attendance.

They told the Committee that figures obtained from different exhibitor organizations throughout the country indicated the following drop in business:

Theatres in the Eastern Pennsylvania territory show a decline of from three to fifteen per cent from 1948, with the drop more marked in the coal mining districts. West Virginia exhibitors report a drop of from 35 to 50 per cent for the first week in 1950 as compared to the same period of 1949, attributing the decline in part to the coal strike. For the same period business was off in the Kansas-Missouri area by 25 per cent; in Michigan, 10 to 12 per cent; in Philadelphia, 4 to 12 per cent; in Colorado, 12½ per cent; in the Gulf States territory, 20 to 25 per cent; in Maryland, 26 to 28 per cent; in Tennessee, 25 per cent; in Minnesota, over 15 per cent; in Illinois, 20 to 30 per cent, with small-town theatres in Southern Illinois reporting a decline of 20 per cent from 1949 and 27 per cent from 1948.

New Jersey reported a drop of 15 per cent for the first five weeks of 1950, and the New England area reported a drop of from 15 to 20 per cent for the same period.

This business decline, according to Myers and Sullivan, is attributable to the increasing competition from television and other forms of entertainment, as well as greater selectivity on the part of the public in their choice of motion pictures.

These figures, to say the least, are alarming. There is no doubt that television is hurting business considerably now that there are approximately four million sets in use and about 100 television broadcasting stations. But if competition from television is tough today what will it be like by the end of 1954, at which time, according to predictions, there will be twenty million sets in use with a total "viewing" audience of about 75,000,000 people—half the population?

The solution to declining box-office receipts is no mystery. It is, as it has always been, good pictures, which the producers are not making in sufficient numbers. No matter how choosy the public becomes, no matter how inclined people are to stay at home near their television sets, a good picture will attract them

to the theatre's box-office. But the mere fact that an exhibitor has booked a good picture is no guarantee that he will do good business, for, unless he advertises and exploits the show properly, it may very well prove to be a box-office dud, in other words, applied showmanship is as important as the good picture itself. As Martin Quigley is credited with saying: "The motion picture good enough to sell itself has not yet been made." No amount of showmanship, however, can make a success of a bad picture.

There has never been a business slump for good pictures, and until the producers learn to make them with more consistency than is now evident, theatre attendance will continue to suffer.

A SOUND ARGUMENT AGAINST BLIND CHECKING

Among the trade practices criticized at the recent mid-winter meeting of National Allied's board of directors was the practice of blind checking, particularly on flat rental pictures.

An effective argument against this practice appears in the current issue of "Theatre Facts," the organization bulletin of the Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana, which had this to say:

"Inasmuch as future flat rentals may be predicated on these checks they penalize the aggressive exhibitor who may go out and heavily exploit some particular picture and pay a premium to the lazy exhibitor who makes no special effort on the same picture. But worse, this information is very likely to be completely inaccurate. We are familiar with more than one instance where this inaccuracy is proven. The result is that a good distributor-exhibitor relationship is completely destroyed by this misinformation."

KEEP SMILING

In the latest of his "newsy" and always informative organization bulletins, Leo F. Wolcott, chairman of the board of Allied's Iowa-Nebraska unit, offers some sound advice to his members regarding the importance of making their theatres more comfortable and inviting if they are to hold their own against competition from television and other forms of entertainment.

"Don't expect your public to get very enthused about it," says Mr. Wolcott, "if your theatre is dingy, uncomfortable and uninviting. Be sure your equipment is in good repair and usable shape. New chairs, carpets, decorations; a new screen does wonders for a theatre. Change your lobby around if possible, and your display frames; make your popcorn machine and candy counter more attractive. New drapes for the boxoffice. Next, rear back and take a look at yourself and your theatre staff—well, maybe there isn't much you can do about that! A few new clothes, a bit neater appearance down the line. But that isn't what I really meant. How do you and your staff treat your public? With utter boredom and dislike? Let's hope not; but many do! Get smiles on every face in your staff, including your own, even if you have to employ facial surgery, and keep them there! A smiling face is like a good mirror—everyone smiles back. Treat your public just like you loved them, even to the dirty little urchins who squirm, and stink, and run all over the place! If you don't, then don't get sore at them because they drive out to the nearest 'Drive-In.'"

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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXXII

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1950

No. 9

THE MIRACLE OF UNITY

The appointment of Abram F. Myers, National Allied's general counsel, as chairman of the Council of Motion Picture Organization's Committee on Taxation and Legislation was a ten-strike for the industry, for Mr. Myers, having become convinced that all segments of the industry were sincere in the movement to protect and safeguard our business and to develop a sound public relations program, rolled up his sleeves and proceeded to work for the common good.

The manner in which he and his able committee members mobilized the industry for the all-out campaign against the federal admission tax serves as a clear demonstration that maximum coordination and cooperation of all branches of the industry can be attained when we are united in a common cause.

The harmony with which this campaign has been and is being conducted was aptly put by Mr. Myers in the talk he made last January at the 20th Century-Fox showmanship meeting, at which time he had this to say, in part:

"The several industry groups which for years have been making snouts at one another have found in the tax menace a common ground on which they can stand in defense of their common interests. Not only are all factions united in the common cause, but they are working together with right good will, and the pledges of support which I have received from rival organizations have been no less cordial than those received from the Allied stalwarts. . . . This united effort is as sincere as it is inspiring, and it should command the respect and support of everyone."

Now that the tax campaign has proved that all factions in the industry can work together in harmony, why not start another campaign, this time to improve our internal relations? Ever since the moving picture became a stable business, buyer and seller have considered themselves like sworn enemies. To alter that feeling and bring about more harmonious relations between the two is not only highly desirable but also essential, if the industry is to devote its efforts to meeting the competition for a just share of the public's entertainment dollar.

The producer-distributor must realize that, because the film he sells is of an unknown value, even when it is adorned with the most popular stars, the exhibitor strives to buy it at the most favorable terms possible in order to make sure that he will be left with a reasonable profit, and that he will cover also whatever losses he may have sustained on other pictures for various reasons, not the least of which is bad weather—there is nothing unnatural about that.

By the same token, the exhibitor, too, must realize

that the producer-distributor must recoup his costs, with a safe margin of profit, enough to cover also the losses he had sustained on other pictures of his that had fallen down—there is nothing unnatural in that either.

The exhibitor who, because of circuit buying power, or a closed situation, or for any other reason, is not paying a fair film rental commensurate with his gross receipts, takes unfair advantage of the producer-distributor and is reaping unjust profits. Conversely, the distributor who makes special concessions in film rental to such an exhibitor, and then seeks to equalize what he should have received by penalizing another exhibitor with excessive film rental demands, is equally unfair.

No matter what arguments each side can present, we cannot get away from the fact that neither one can exist without the other. Each side has an investment to protect, and the quicker both realize that they must deal with the other on a basis offering reasonable opportunity for profit, the sooner the business will be on a healthy basis.

Each side should stop calling the other side names. Negotiations for the buying and selling of product can be carried on without resorting to words that bring about bitterness.

As head of COMPO, Ned E. Depinet, president of RKO, can do a lot to start a movement to bring about a better understanding of the fundamental relationships between the producer-distributors and the exhibitors.

The industry has become of age and it is time that its components stopped acting like suspicious children.

THE FORGOTTEN TAXPAYERS

Joe Kennedy, manager of the El Portal Theatre, a Fox-West Coast house, sent me a clipping of the following editorial, which appeared in the February 18 issue of the North Hollywood Valley Times, under the heading "Eliminate Admission Tax":

"Motion pictures have been and will continue to be one of the most refreshing forms of entertainment available to American families—if they are not taxed out of the theatres.

"Relaxation is a necessity—not a luxury—and the Federal government must cease collecting a 20 per cent war time excise tax on admissions.

"Actually, a situation has arisen where those who pay a major portion of this excise tax have no voice in government—they are the youngsters of our Nation.

(Continued on back page)

"Buccaneer's Girl" with Yvonne De Carlo, Philip Friend and Elsa Lanchester

(Universal, March; time, 77 min.)

Although it is handicapped by a hackneyed plot and by a script that even the world's best cast could do little with, this Technicolor romantic adventure melodrama is a fair enough entertainment for the undiscriminating picture-goers. It has all the ingredients one expects to find in a swashbuckler, such as cannon fire, flashing swords, fisticuffs, piracy on the high seas, scuttled ships and last-minute rescues, all of which should satisfy the demands of those who enjoy this type of action. As a fiery, quick-tempered singer who falls in love with a gentleman pirate chief, a sort of Robin Hood character, Yvonne De Carlo isn't called upon for much in the way of a performance, but she is good to look at and, like the others in the cast, her acting is adequate enough, considering the flimsiness of the material:—

Yvonne, a stowaway on a sailing ship raided by pirates, is captured and held prisoner by Philip Friend, notorious leader of the buccaneers, known to all as Baptiste. When Friend goes ashore at New Orleans, Yvonne escapes and meets up with Elsa Lanchester, operator of a school for feminine entertainers, who offers to help her develop her talents. Yvonne is assigned to sing at a seamen's fund benefit party at a waterfront saloon. There she discovers that the fund's chief benefactor and host at the function is none other than Friend, known to all as a socially acceptable gentleman. He persuades her to keep his secret, explaining that Baptiste, the real pirate chief, was dead, and that he had assumed his identity and activities only to avenge himself on Robert Douglas, a wealthy shipowner, who had ruined his (Friend's) father by hiring Baptiste to destroy his ships. He explains also that he turned the proceeds of his loot over to the seamen's fund. Yvonne gets herself involved with Andrea King, Friend's haughty fiancée, who jealously creates a disturbance while she sings. Yvonne gives her a beating and hides out on Friend's ship to elude arrest. In the events that follow, Andrea marries Douglas, who by this time had discovered Friend's pirate activities. Through a ruse, Douglas has Friend captured and condemned to hang. Yvonne takes matters in hand and, while Friend awaits the execution, she incites his buccaneers into attacking the jail. Friend, freed, escapes to his ship and, with Yvonne at his side, sets sail for the open seas.

It was produced by Robert Arthur and directed by Frederick de Cordova, from a screen play by Harold Shumate and Joseph Hoffman, based on a story by Joe May and Samuel R. Golding. The cast includes Jay C. Flippen, Henry Daniell and others.

Suitable for the family.

"Quicksand" with Mickey Rooney, Jeanne Cagney and Barbara Bates

(United Artists, March 25; time, 79 min.)

A fine production. It has been produced with such skill that the spectator is made to feel as if present in the unfolding of a real-life drama. Mickey Rooney is an accomplished trooper; he gives his part realism—one feels as if his acts are committed by a real person instead of a screen character. The story shows him breaking the law and in his efforts to extricate himself he sinks deeper and deeper, as in quicksand; he is sucked in, and the more he tries to extricate himself by committing other crimes, the deeper he sinks. To this extent, the picture might prove a lesson to young men who think that they can get away with a small crime. Jeanne Cagney, as the callous woman who does not hesitate to let Mickey suffer the consequences of his crime, which she herself had suggested, is realistic. Throughout the story one feels sympathy for Barbara Bates, who loves Mickey with such devotion that she is willing to share whatever his fortunes might be. Taylor Holmes is good as the understanding lawyer. The direction is expert:—

Rooney, a mechanic at Art Smith's garage, vows that he is through with women because Barbara had pressed him for marriage. But he changes his mind when he meets Jeanne, the new cashier at a restaurant nearby; he dates her. Short of money to entertain her, he takes \$20 from the garage cash register with the intention of returning it on the following

day because a friend had promised to repay \$20 he had lent him. The friend fails to pay him, and Mickey, fearing that the bookkeeper will discover the shortage, buys a watch on the installment plan and hocks it to replace the \$20. The jeweller, suspicious, traces the transaction and demands full payment or return of the watch within 24 hours under threat of informing the district attorney. Desperate, Mickey holds up a drunkard who had flashed a roll of \$50 bills. He squares himself with the jeweller and then goes looking for Jeanne. He finds her in Peter Lorre's penny arcade, just as Lorre is trying to force his attentions on her, claiming that she owed him \$50. Mickey knocks him down and throws a \$50 bill at him. Lorre rightly suspects that the \$50 bill was evidence of the robbery and, under threat of going to the police, forces Mickey to steal a new car from the garage he worked in and to deliver it to him. Smith, Mickey's boss, bluntly accuses Mickey of stealing the car and threatens to jail him unless he makes payment of \$3,000. In desperation, Mickey tells Jeanne of his predicament, and she suggests that they rob Lorre's place after he closes. The robbery nets them \$3,600, which Mickey leaves in Jeanne's custody until the following day. She crosses Mickey by spending half the loot for a fur coat. Smith, however, accepts \$1,800, then attempts to call the police. Mickey, infuriated, knocks the gun out of his hand, chokes him, and leaves him for dead. He bumps into Barbara and persuades her to go with him to Mexico. Their car stalls en route and Mickey holds up Taylor Holmes, a lawyer, and forces him to drive to Mexico. On the way Holmes makes Mickey realize that he is implicating Barbara, an innocent person, and that it would be best for him to make a getaway by himself. Mickey orders him to drive to a wharf in San Diego, where he hoped to board a boat for Mexico. He is recognized by the police, who wound and capture him after a wild chase. Meanwhile Holmes learns that Smith is alive. He so informs Mickey and offers to defend him, telling him that, as a first offender, he may get him off with a one year sentence. Barbara promises to wait for him.

It was produced by Mort Briskin and directed by Irving Pichel from an original screen play by Robert Smith. It is a Samuel H. Stiefel production. (Mr. Stiefel is a well known Philadelphia exhibitor.)

An adult picture.

"Blonde Dynamite" with the Bowery Boys and Adele Jergens

(Monogram, February 12; time, 66 min.)

While "Blonde Dynamite" will in all likelihood satisfy the followers of this series of pictures, it is the weakest that has been released for some time. The efforts of the producer to present something new is praiseworthy, but the action is slow most of the time, and the offense to logic more pronounced. The comedy situations provoke some laughter, but not much. The photography is pretty good, as usual:—

Leo Gorcey and his gang induce Bernard Gorcey and his wife to take a vacation while they operate his malt shop. While Bernard is away, Leo turns the shop into an escort bureau, with Billy Benedict, Buddy Gorman and David Gorcey as professional escorts. Gabriel Dell, a bank messenger and one of their friends, is robbed of \$5,000 in bank funds. Suspecting Adele Jergens as the one who had relieved him of the money envelope, Dell calls on her and in her apartment finds Harry Lewis and his two confederates, with whom Adele was in league. Dell is told that the money would be returned to him only if he should deliver to them the combination of the bank's vault. Lewis planned to use the malt shop to dig a tunnel leading to the bank, to rob it. The crooks go to the shop and, when they find Huntz Hall there, they tell him that they are government men, in search of a uranium deposit. Believing their tale, Hall aids in the excavation. Meanwhile Dell, aware of their scheme, goes to the police. Lewis' blue print for a tunnel leading to the bank misfires when he and his pals bore through to a police station instead.

Jan Grippo produced it and William Beaudine directed it from a screen play by Charles Marion.

Harmless for children.

"Stars in My Crown" with Joel McCrea, Ellen Drew and Dean Stockwell

(MGM, no rel. date set; time, 89 min.)

A deeply appealing, heartwarming human interest drama, dealing with the life and work of a fearless parson who settles down in a small Southern town at the close of the Civil War. It is the type of picture that family audiences in particular should enjoy, for the manner in which the parson brings spiritual guidance to the community, while combating racial prejudice, greed and mistrust, is unfolded in a sympathetic and impressive way. Some of the situations are powerfully dramatic. One such situation is where the parson shames a hooded mob to thwart the hanging of a dignified, kindly old Negro. An outbreak of a typhoid epidemic among the townspeople serves as the basis for other dramatic situations. Although the action unfolds with a minimum of excitement, there is considerable charm in the story's simplicity and nice touches of humor and romance. The direction is expert and the acting uniformly excellent:—

Joel McCrea, a Civil War veteran, comes to the town of Walesburg with a determination to become its minister, despite the scoffers. Within a few years the villagers build a church for him, and he marries Ellen Drew. Together they adopt and raise Dean Stockwell, Ellen's nephew, who idolizes McCrea. Although outwardly peaceful, the town has disturbing undercurrents. Juan Hernandez, a kindly old Negro farmer, is hounded by Ed Begley, greedy owner of the general store, because of his refusal to sell his small plot of land, which Begley wanted for the mica vein running through it. Begley incites a group of villagers to raid the old man's farm, destroying his crops and livestock. Community unrest stems also from the people's lack of confidence in James Mitchell, a young doctor, who had taken over the practice of his failing father (Lewis Stone). Shunned, Mitchell finds consolation in his love for Amanda Blake, the schoolteacher. When a typhoid epidemic strikes, Mitchell works day and night to combat it, finally winning the respect and admiration of everyone. In the process, Mitchell, who thought little of spiritual needs, gains a new appreciation of McCrea, whose prayers help to save Amanda from the disease. When word reached McCrea that a gang of hooded riders planned to lynch Hernandez that night, McCrea hurries to the old man's farm unarmed, and thwarts the hanging by reading the Negro's will, in which he leaves all his earthly possessions to the very men who were preparing to kill him. Ashamed, the mob slinks away. Young Dean, picking up the will when it drops from McCrea's hand, discovers that the paper is blank! McCrea heads for home, happy that calm had been restored to the community.

It was produced by William H. Wright and directed by Jacques Tourneur from a screen play by Margaret Pitts, based on the novel by Joe David Brown.

Excellent for the family.

"Perfect Strangers" with Ginger Rogers and Dennis Morgan

(Warner Bros., March 25; time, 88 min.)

An interesting human interest drama, revolving around two married persons who fall in love while serving as jurors in a murder trial. Based on the 1939 stage play, "Ladies and Gentlemen," by Charles MacArthur and Ben Hecht, it holds one's attention, not so much because of the story itself, which is rather thin, but because of the enlightening and entertaining way in which it goes behind the scenes of a murder trial to show the proceedings of a jury and the individual behavior of the jurors themselves. Thelma Ritter, as the simple-minded wife of a truck driver; Margalo Fillmore, as a frustrated society matron; Anthony Ross, as a middle-aged masher; Howard Freeman, as a skinflint "sourpuss"; and all the others make up a colorful cross-section of the type of people who serve as jurors. Both Ginger Rogers and Dennis Morgan are highly effective and sympathetic in the leading roles. There is considerable drama in their own romance because of the fact that it parallels the unfortunate love affair of the defendant on trial for the murder of his wife. The ending, though it satisfies the production code, may not please many patrons. It is the type of picture that should fare better in the big cities than in the small towns, because

of the leisurely pace and of the adult treatment of its theme:

Ginger, a business woman separated from her husband, and Morgan, a married man and the father of two children, serve as jurors in the murder trial of a man accused of killing his wife for another woman. The judge locks up the jury in hotel rooms during the trial, and as it progresses Ginger and Morgan fall madly in love. Ginger, however, makes Morgan promise that he will try to make a go of his own marriage before he decides to get a divorce. When the trial is over and the jurors begin their balloting, nine vote for acquittal and three for conviction, with the three voting guilty insisting that the killing could not have been an accident because of the defendant's love for another woman. The jurors remain deadlocked until Ginger, by exposing her own romance with Morgan, convinces the three holdouts that it is wholly possible for a married man to fall honestly in love with another woman, and that such a love need not be the motive for criminal action. The jury votes acquittal. With the trial over, Ginger and Morgan discuss their situation soberly and come to the conclusion that, because of the pitfalls before them, a lasting love between them would not be possible. They agree to part and return to their respective spouses.

It was produced by Jerry Wald and directed by Brethaigne Windust, from a screen play by Edith Sommer.

Adult fare.

"A Woman of Distinction" with Rosalind Russell and Ray Milland

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 85 min.)

Smart dialogue and slapstick have been blended to good advantage in this highly amusing romantic comedy. The story itself is thin, but the well contrived gags and situations keep one laughing all the way through. As the dean of a women's college with no place for romance in her life, Rosalind Russell is cast in the type of role that is tailored to her comedy talents. Even though the part calls for her to be smeared with mud, sprayed by a garden hose and almost strangled when her garment gets caught in an electric fan, she puts over the slapstick in fine tyle. Most of the comedy stems from the predicaments she finds herself in when she becomes romantically involved with a British lecturer as a result of an imaginative press agent's machinations. Ray Milland, as the lecturer, an astronomy professor, adds much to the fast and funny proceedings:—

Rosalind, entirely engrossed in her career, reveals in a published interview that she has no room for romance in her life, and that she preferred to live with her father, Edmund Gwenn, and her adopted daughter, Mary Jane Saunders. When Milland arrives in the United States for a lecture tour, Janis Carter, a press agent handling the tour, learns that he wanted to visit Rosalind to give her some mementos entrusted to him by a dying French soldier she knew in France. Janis, looking for an angle to sell the stuffy lecture tour, informs the press that Milland and Rosalind are in love. Rosalind, who had never met Milland, is so annoyed by the publicity that she takes the first train to Boston, where he was to deliver his first lecture, determined to scotch the rumors. Both meet on the train and are mutually attracted, although unaware of each other's identity. But she learns who he is when they arrive in Boston and, in a rage, hits him with her handbag. Her action is snapped by a news photographer, resulting in more publicity. To add to Rosalind's woes, her father invites Milland to their home in an effort to foster a romance between them. This leads to numerous complications, aggravated further by a rumor that little Mary is Rosalind's own child. The rumor about Mary's parenthood becomes so insistent that the faculty demands an investigation. Furious at the implications as to her character and morals, Rosalind finds herself in a deeper mess when Milland, believing the rumor, chivalrously claims that he is Mary's father. After many other mixups, Rosalind resigns as dean and surrenders to her love for Milland, after proving that Mary is an adopted child.

It was produced by Buddy Adler and directed by Edward Buzzell from a screen play by Charles Hoffman, based on a story by Hugo Butler and Ian M. Hunter.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The parents actually pay this tax, we know, but the youngsters have the ability to stretch their weekly allowances sharply curtailed.

"These young people must pay this tax while being denied the privileges of signing petitions or voting against the collection of this unfair tax. However, they can write letters to those responsible, and influence their parents to oppose continuing the excise tax.

"Maybe now is the time for youngsters to prove the Biblical observation that 'a little child shall lead them.'"

No doubt Mr. Kennedy has inspired this editorial, and HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to congratulate him for the originality of his idea, and for the possible uses to which it may be put. Although the 'teen-agers have no voice in government because they are not old enough to vote, there is nothing to stop them from making their feelings known to the Congressional representatives from their districts. The admission tax looms big to the youngsters, for it takes a considerable bite out of their limited allowances, and the exhibitors in each locality should take steps to organize and induce them to bombard their legislators with protests against the tax. Who is the politician who will dare refuse to heed the protests of youngsters who will one day decide whether or not he shall be returned to office?

HARRISON'S REPORTS submits these views to Mr. Myers' committee on taxation for whatever use they may be put to.

AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION

In a communication to this paper, Mr. Myers points out that, because so much has been said and written about "war excise taxes," many members of our industry carelessly use that expression in writing to their Congressmen and Senators in connection with the campaign against the federal admission tax. "They overlook the fact," Mr. Myers says, "that there was a 10% tax on admissions when the 20% 'wartime rate' was imposed, and that mere repeal of the 'war excises' or 'war rates' will leave the industry saddled with the pre-existing 10% tax."

By careless use of this expression, Mr. Myers adds, many industryites are in effect asking for only half a loaf when they should ask for total repeal—which is what they really mean.

In writing to your Congressional representatives, you should, therefore, make it a point to ask for "repeal of the admission tax," and to keep out of your letters or telegrams any reference to "war excises" or "war rates." The distinction is important if we are to win the fight for total repeal.

"Young Daniel Boone" with David Bruce

(Monogram, February 26; time, 71 min.)

There is considerable merit to this Indian Scout melodrama, photographed in Cinecolor. There are some slow moments, but the action is mostly fast, holding one's attention. David Bruce is very good as young Daniel Boone, of historic fame. Kristine Miller, as one of the girls captured by the Indians, is personable but she is not given much to do. The situations in which the lives of the hero and of the members of his

party are placed in danger hold one tense because of fear that some harm will come to them. Their fights with the Indians are fairly thrilling. The color photography is pleasing, since it is chiefly outdoors:—

The action unfolds in the Colonial days, around 1775, when the troops of John Mylong, a Hessian officer in the British Army, under Gen. Braddock, had been massacred by the Indians, but Mylong and Don Beddoe, a civilian army supplier, were among the few who had escaped alive. Mylong wants to reach the headquarters of Stanley Logan, his superior officer, but Beddoe, having seen his daughters (Kristine Miller and Mary Treen) taken captive by the Indians, wants to rescue them. Mylong, however, dissuades him from the useless sacrifice. When word reaches Logan about the massacre, he dispatches Damian O'Flynn, a captain, to inform Gen. Braddock and to rescue Mylong. He sends along also Bruce, who knew the woods well. O'Flynn, actually a traitor in the pay of the French Intelligence, arranges with Indian friends to capture Mylong along with Beddoe. Both men are rescued by Bruce, however, who manages also to free Beddoe's two daughters. Bruce and his party make their way to an abandoned fort, where they are soon joined by O'Flynn, still posing as a friend. By trickery, O'Flynn makes Bruce and the others his prisoners, and then reveals that he is an agent for the French. But when all are attacked by Shawnee Indians, hostile to both British and French, O'Flynn is compelled to seek the aid of both Bruce and Mylong to repel them. After the repulse, Bruce makes O'Flynn and his Indians captives, but they turn the tables on him and become the captors once again. Bruce, however, escapes and, by playing upon the superstitions of the Indians, succeeds in rescuing his friends. But O'Flynn attacks him and, during the fight, falls upon his own knife and dies. Bruce looks forward to his future in Kentucky, with Kristine as his wife.

The picture has been produced by James S. Burkett and directed by Reginald LeBorg, from a story by Clinton Johnston, who wrote the screen play in collaboration with Mr. LeBorg.

Unobjectionable morally.

BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES

The previous box-office performances were published in the December 3 and 10 issues:

Columbia

"The Reckless Moment": Fair-Poor
 "Tokyo Joe": Good-Fair
 "Rusty's Birthday": Poor
 "Barbary Pirates": Fair-Poor
 "Feudin' Rhythm": Poor
 "Tell It to the Judge": Fair
 "And Baby Makes Three": Fair
 "Prison Warden": Fair-Poor
 "All the King's Men": Very Good-Good
 "Traveling Saleswoman": Fair
 "Mary Ryan, Detective": Fair
 "Chinatown at Midnight": Fair-Poor
 "Jolson Sings Again": Good-Fair
 "Father is a Bachelor": Fair
 "The Nevadan": Fair
 "Mark of the Gorilla": Fair-Poor
 "Girls' School": Fair-Poor

Seventeen pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 6; Poor, 2.

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Vol. XXXII

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 1950

No. 10

THE 20TH CENTURY-FOX SHOWMANSHIP MEETING

The big news of the week is the unprecedented exhibitor showmanship meeting sponsored by 20th Century-Fox at the Drake Hotel in Chicago, on March 8 and 9, for the purpose of offering a program of aggressive showmanship to stimulate attendance at the nation's theatres.

The program, embodied in a manual entitled "A Showman's Guide to Better Business," was offered on the first day of the meeting before an assemblage of more than three hundred of the nation's leading exhibitors, sales executives, industry leaders and trade press representatives, and was outlined by the company's advertising and publicity staff, headed by vice-president Charles Einfeld.

The purpose of the Showman's Guide is stated in a foreword, which reads as follows:

"At this turn of the mid-century there is a generally recognized need for a reorientation in showmanship. The lush period of the war is gone and the time has come to revitalize and invigorate the showmanship that always has been and always will be an important factor in the presentation of the public's greatest form of entertainment; the time to re-emphasize the fundamental techniques and methods that were the stock in trade of pioneer exhibitors, and to adopt them to suit modern methods of merchandising. Hollywood is doing its part by delivering better pictures today than ever before. Let us all join in a concerted effort to inform the world of this resurgence of our great industry.

"To that end this Showman's Guide to Better Business has been prepared by Twentieth Century-Fox as an industry service. It is designed to rekindle the spark of showmanship and to stimulate an aggressive attitude in selling motion pictures to the public. Many of the suggestions herein are already employed by the successful showman but many more are not being practiced. This guide is intended as an aid to showmen and had been prepared in the spirit of helpfulness."

The Guide, which is adaptable for every theatre, presents an array of articles that offer invaluable advice to the exhibitor to help him attract more customers to his theatre.

The lead-off article, written by A. J. Balaban, managing director of the Roxy Theatre in New York, and entitled "At Your Service," stresses the importance of making each theatre patron feel like a personally invited guest through services and courtesies of a varied character, all designed to provide the best, not only in entertainment, but also in comfort. Included in this informative article is a check list of personal services that will help retain and build the good will and patronage of your theatre.

The next article, written by Red Kann, of Quigley Publications, cites the need for exploration and greater enthusiasm in trying new methods of merchandising.

The importance of community service activities is the subject of the next article, which stresses the need for greater action on the part of the exhibitor in offering the theatre's facilities for fund-raising efforts and other community activities in much the same manner as was done during the war.

In an interesting article on programming, Morton G. Thalheimer, of the Neighborhood Theatre in Richmond, Va., points up the importance of diversifying the entertainment offered, studying the clientele, and knowing the taste of your patrons so that the pictures you buy will fit in with their wishes and desires.

Methods to capture patrons who come to the movies irregularly, and to make regular customers of them are dis-

cussed in an article by Walter Brooks, of the *Motion Picture Herald's* Showman's Round Table.

In an article entitled "The Movie Habit," Chester Bahn, editor of the *Film Daily*, points up the need of attracting the youngsters with all the showmanship at our command to make certain that the children of today will become the constant movie-goers of tomorrow.

Mr. Bahn's piece is followed by an article that calls attention to the building of children's matinees, and outlines allied methods that will help to create community interest in organizing a children's movie program.

Under the heading, "Mr. Showman, Take the Rostrum," the guide next offers for the use of the exhibitor or any member of his staff a prepared sample speech that can be used in talks before local organizations and civic groups in the community. The speech, which can be edited easily to suit the requirements of the group addressed, stresses the point that the public gets more for its entertainment dollar at the motion picture theatre than at any other form of entertainment, and it cites facts and figures that will enlighten the listeners and give them a new appreciation of what the motion picture means to the community.

How a small theatre can become an entertainment center for a goodly number of discriminating adults is the subject of an interesting article by Leo Brecher, veteran New York exhibitor, who is a pioneer in this type of operation.

Under the general heading of "Come to the Theatre," the Guide offers some basic answers as well as new ideas on what can be done to make it easier, more pleasant, and more inviting to come to the theatre. Included in this piece are informative notes on time tables, special movie buses, parking facilities, checking arrangements, deportment of the theatre staff, etc.

"Local Community Showmanship" is the title of an impressive article by Morton Sunshine, editor of the *Independent Film Journal*, who discusses the position of the exhibitor in his community, and the efforts he can make to have his civic activities reflect to the benefit of his theatre.

Outside activity designed to stimulate greater interest in motion pictures is treated in an article by Senn Lawler, director of advertising for Fox Midwest Theatres.

Chester Friedman, editor of the *Boxoffice Showmandiser* section, discusses the importance of going directly to your patrons' homes to find out what they think of your theatre, and describes the technique that should be employed in such a survey.

In a section entitled "Idea Mart," the Guide offers the exhibitor new ways and methods of attracting patrons and increasing interest in his theatre. Part of the information contained in this section includes the "Welcome Wagon" technique for new members of the community; stimulation of photography clubs; progress reports for patrons, containing news of civic activities in which the theatre plays a part, and including general news about motion pictures; and inaugurating an "event of the month" in cooperation with civic, fraternal and religious organizations to build up the theatre as a community center.

The Guide is completed with a section entitled, "What is Your Showmanship I.Q.?" posing fifty questions that every exhibitor ought to ask himself to learn if he is doing all he can to sell his theatre and motion pictures properly.

As further evidence that 20th Century-Fox is sincere in its desire to enhance the prestige of the theatre in the community, to stimulate attendance, and to call attention to the showmanship program's slogan, "Movies Are Better Than Ever," the company has designed two very fine 600-line institutional advertisements and has announced that it will

(Continued on last page)

"The Outriders" with Joel McCrea, Barry Sullivan and Arlene Dahl

(MGM, April; time, 93 min.)

An exciting big-scale outdoor melodrama, photographed in Technicolor. Although made up of familiar ingredients, it is better than most so-called "glorified" westerns, for the story is interesting, the direction capable, and the acting highly competent. The action fans in particular should get their money's worth, for the story is full of thundering hoofs, shooting, and battles with Indians. A highly exciting, well staged sequence is where the wagon train fords a raging river. One of the opening scenes, where a Union soldier is stabbed to death in a river, with his blood coming to the surface of the water, is too gory and gruesome. The outdoor photography is exceptionally good:—

Joel McCrea, Barry Sullivan and James Whitmore, Confederate soldiers, escape from a Union prison stockade in Missouri only to fall into the hands of a band of guerrillas headed by Jeff Corey, one of Quantrell's infamous raiders. Learning that they are Southerners, Corey, under threat of death, compels them to join his outfit and assigns them on a mission to Sante Fe, where Ramon Navarro was due to leave with a wagon train carrying gold bullion for the Federal Treasury in St. Louis. They were to offer their services as outriders, then guide the wagon train to a prearranged spot, where Corey would be waiting to ambush it. McCrea is told that the gold would go to the depleted coffers of the Confederacy. In Sante Fe, the three men are rejected by Navarro, who mistrusts them, but later, when they beat off an Indian attack on the train, he hires them and places McCrea in charge. En route McCrea falls in love with Arlene Dahl, a young widow traveling as a passenger with her young brother-in-law (Claude Jarman, Jr.). Sullivan, sly and brooding, resents McCrea's warnings to keep away from Arlene. McCrea becomes motivated by a determination that nothing should happen to her. Upon arriving in Missouri, news that the war had ended comes as a relief to him. Sullivan, however, insists that they continue to the appointed ambush. McCrea, suspicious, learns that Sullivan and Corey planned to keep the gold for themselves. He makes Sullivan his prisoner, but he manages to escape. Before long the wagon train is attacked by Corey's forces and a pitched gun battle ensues, but McCrea, by deploying his men carefully, brings death to the raiders, including Corey and Sullivan.

It was produced by Richard Goldstone and directed by Roy Rowland from a story and screen play by Irving Ravetch. Unobjectionable morally.

"Barricade" with Dane Clark, Raymond Massey and Ruth Roman

(Warner Bros., April 1; time, 75 min.)

Although well produced and photographed in Technicolor, this outdoor melodrama is too unpleasant and brutal for most picture-goers; its appeal will be directed mainly to men who do not mind viciousness in the extreme. Women undoubtedly will find it too harrowing and depressing because of the bestiality of several of the characters, particularly the one portrayed by Raymond Massey, as a brutish type of man who rules a prison-like mining camp with ruthlessness. There is no comedy to relieve the tension. There is suspense and excitement in some of the situations, but on the whole it is not a good entertainment, for the actions of most of the characters, even those who are somewhat sympathetic, are distasteful:—

Because Massey's mining camp on the desert was inaccessible, escaped convicts work for him and suffer his ruthlessness. Dane Clark, a spirited young man but a fugitive from justice, reluctantly takes a job in the mine. Involuntary guests are Ruth Roman, a girl who had escaped from prison, and Robert Douglas, an idealistic lawyer. Both had been injured in a stagecoach wreck and had been found by Walter Coy, Massey's foreman. Massey, accustomed to servile obedience from his men, is annoyed by Clark's arrogant defiance. He becomes also suspicious of Douglas, who was trying to discover the secret behind his control of the mine. Ruth nursed back to health, asks Massey for transportation across

the desert, but he refuses and ridicules her. Enraged by Massey's treatment of Ruth, Clark unsuccessfully tries to kill him and is given a severe beating. Morgan Farley, a former judge turned drunkard, commits suicide when he is no longer able to stand the humiliation heaped upon him by Massey, but before he dies he reveals that Massey has murdered his own brother to gain control of the mine, and that the dead man's son had sworn to return one day to avenge the murder and reclaim the mine. Clark, recovered from his beating, plans to escape from the mine with Ruth. Aided by his co-workers, he lures Massey and his foreman into the mine and traps them by causing a cave-in with a dynamite charge. Ruth and Clark head across the desert in a horse-drawn wagon, but they are forced to return when they discover that the wily Massey had salted the water bags to foil an attempted escape. Meanwhile Massey frees himself from the mine and re-establishes his authority. With discipline restored, the long dreaded arrival of Massey's nephew occurs, and all except Massey die in the vicious battle. Arriving at the camp, Clark and Ruth are confronted by Massey. The two men engage in a battle to the death, with Clark emerging the victor. Ruth and Clark decide to repay their debt to society so as to enjoy happiness later.

It was produced by Saul Elkins and directed by Peter Godfrey from a story by William Sackheim.

Strictly adult fare.

"Shadow on the Wall" with Ann Sothern, Zachary Scott and Gigi Perreau

(MGM, May; time, 84 min.)

A fairly interesting psychiatric thriller, revolving around a six-year-old child whose mind is temporarily affected by the shock of seeing her stepmother murdered. Although the plot is far-fetched, it holds one's attention to a fair degree because of the fact that the child's father is wrongly convicted for the crime and the child is too overcome by shock to offer evidence that would clear him. A considerable part of the footage, in fact, too much, is concerned with psychiatric treatments, which eventually help the child to identify the real culprit. Some suspense is brought about by the fact that the murderess makes several attempts to kill the child before she can identify her. The direction and acting are competent, but it is not a pleasant entertainment:—

Zachary Scott, having discovered that his wife, Kristine Miller, had been carrying on an affair with the fiancé of her sister, Ann Sothern, gets into a violent quarrel with her. During the argument, Kristine knocks him unconscious, just as Ann enters the room and shoots her dead. The crime is witnessed by Gigi Perreau, Scott's little daughter, but the shock affects her memory. Scott is convicted for the crime on circumstantial evidence. Gigi, committed to a children's psychiatric ward, finds a friend in Nancy Davis, a sympathetic psychiatrist, who determines to break through the child's veil of forgetfulness. Through the treatments she gives Gigi, Nancy becomes convinced that a third person was involved in the murder, and patiently tries to make the youngster reconstruct the crime through the use of a doll's house matching the room arrangement of her own home. Ann, secure in the knowledge that her secret is safe, is plagued by misgivings when she learns of the work being done by Nancy with Gigi. Feigning interest in the child's welfare, she visits the hospital frequently and makes two unsuccessful attempts on the child's life, both of which appear to be accidents. Unaware of what is going on but suspicious of Ann, Nancy becomes concerned when she learns that Gigi had been placed under Ann's guardianship, and that she was to live with her in her Connecticut home. She accompanies the child there. When Gigi sees Ann, she starts to scream, for the clothes Ann wears casts a shadow on the wall in a pattern similar to the shadow Gigi had seen on the night of the murder. Ann, aware that her secret had been discovered, hysterically confesses the crime. It ends with Gigi and Scott reunited.

It was produced by Robert Sisk and directed by Patrick Jackson from a screen play by William Ludwig, based on the story, "Death in a Doll's House," by Hannah Lees and Lawrence P. Bachmann. Adult fare.

**"Please Believe Me" with Deborah Kerr,
Robert Walker, Mark Stevens
and Peter Lawford**

(MGM, May; time, 86 min.)

This romantic comedy-farce has its humorous moments, but on the whole it is only mildly entertaining. Revolving around a pretty English girl who comes to the United States to claim what she mistakenly believes is a fortune, the story is a rather flimsy affair that misses fire despite the struggles of the cast to breathe life and laughter into it. Most of the comedy stems from her romantic entanglements with three men—one a fortune-hunter, another a wealthy, irresponsible playboy, and the third the playboy's lawyer, who believes that the heroine has designs on his client. For the most part, however, the comedy fails to register because it is forced. Moreover, the picture suffers from situations that are dragged out to a point where they become tiresome. The superficial treatment, the meagerness of the writing, and the lack of ingenuity in the direction keep it from being the sprightly entertainment it was meant to be:—

Unaware that a 50,000-acre ranch willed to her by an American friend was worth less than ten cents an acre, Deborah Kerr boards a boat for the United States believing she is wealthy. En route, she becomes the objective of Robert Walker, who was seeking to marry an heiress in order to pay up a debt to J. Carrol Naish, a gambler. Naish was financing Walker's quest, and had hired James Whitmore to pose as his valet and check his expenditures. Walker's campaign hits a snag when Peter Lawford, a wealthy playboy, makes a play for Deborah. But Lawford, too, finds himself stymied when Mark Stevens, his lawyer, tries to protect him from a possible adventuress and falls in love with Deborah himself. Stevens' faith in her is shattered when Whitmore, to rid Walker of opposition, implies that Deborah and Walker had hatched a plot to mulct Lawford of his money. Learning that Stevens mistrusts her, Deborah becomes furious and deliberately plays up to Lawford when they land in New York. Meanwhile Walker manages to introduce her to Naish, who agrees to advance him additional funds. By this time convinced that Deborah is honest, Stevens becomes suspicious again when he learns that her ranch was worthless. He offers to marry her anyway, but she walks out on him. Now aware of her own financial position, as well as of Walker's, Deborah cooks up a scheme whereby she legitimately tricks Lawford into buying a rug from her for many times its value, but she tears up the check at the last moment because of her inherent honesty. The climax has all three men proposing to her, with Stevens emerging the winner.

It was produced by Val Lewton and directed by Norman Taurog from a story and screen play by Nathaniel Curtis.

Harmless for the family.

**"The Great Plane Robbery"
with Tom Conway and Margaret Hamilton**
(United Artists, Mar. 10; time, 61 min.)

A mediocre program melodrama. It will provide a minimum of entertainment for even the most indiscriminating movie-goers, for the story is synthetic, implausible and routine throughout. Even the direction and acting are undistinguished. Practically all the action takes place aboard a plane and, except for a fight between the villain and the pilot, it offers little excitement. As a matter of fact, even though the picture runs for only one hour it has been padded considerably to give it that length. There is some comedy, but it is silly and inept:—

Told by the flashback method, the story opens with a huge airliner, piloted by Tom Conway, preparing to take off from New York to Los Angeles. Included among the passengers are Marcel Journet, a diamond merchant; Steve Brodie and David Bruce, two slick-looking characters; and Margaret Hamilton, a typical busybody. The plane goes as far as Kansas City without incident, but when it departs after a short stopover the stewardesses find one of the passengers murdered in the wardrobe compartment. Before they can report their discovery, however, Bruce and Brodie draw

guns and systematically rob the passengers, taking also Journet's jewel case. They destroy the plane's radio equipment and then parachute through the plane's escape hatch. Journet begins a tirade about holding the airline responsible for his loss, but, when Margaret discloses that the crooks had taken an empty jewel case from him, he draws a gun and admits that he had masterminded the whole affair. He reveals that the passenger found murdered was an insurance detective assigned to protect his jewels, and that he had hired Bruce and Brodie to stage the fake hold-up. By putting the plane into a fast bank, Conway throws Journet off balance and engages him in a desperate fight with the plane out of control. He finally subdues Journet, brings the plane under control, and has his co-pilot rig up a makeshift radio to contact the Los Angeles airport. The plane is met by the police, who take Journet into custody.

It was produced by Sam Baerwitz, who wrote the screen play in collaboration with Richard G. Hubler, based on a story by Russell Rouse and Clarence Greene. Edward L. Cahn directed it.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"The Reformer and the Redhead"
with June Allyson and Dick Powell**

(MGM, May; time, 90 min.)

A pretty good romantic comedy. Revolving around a crusading young lawyer who beats and exposes a crooked political machine, the story is basically familiar, but good comedy situations, bright dialogue, and a charming and amusing romance make it an entertainment that should be enjoyed by most audiences. Dick Powell is effective as the lawyer, and June Allyson is just right as the pert, vivacious redhead who wins his heart. Considerable laughter is provoked by the encounters Powell has with a tame lion and other animals who wander about June's home. The sequence where he meets a vicious lion escaped from the zoo and thinks the beast to be June's pet will have the audience howling. David Wayne, as Powell's cynical law partner, and Marvin Kaplan, as their unhappy law clerk, add much to the amusing proceedings:—

Returning from a big game expedition to oversee the coming election for Mayor, Ray Collins, political boss of a small California city, is persuaded by his aides to back Powell, a progressive young lawyer who had been brought up in the city's orphanage. Powell, a little slick himself, asks for time to consider the candidacy so as not to appear too eager. Meanwhile Collins sees to it that Cecil Kellaway, superintendent of the zoo, is discharged for opposing his donations of mounted hunt trophies; Kellaway disapproved of killing wild life. Collins' action riles June, his daughter, who gets into a scrap with Collins' niece and lands in jail. Released on bail, she takes her case to Powell, who becomes sympathetic when she accuses Collins of crooked politics to oust her father. He goes to see Kellaway at his ranch and, after a trying time with June's pet lion, obtains a clue about Collins' crooked leadership. He goes out of town to check on Collins and, during his absence, June enlists the aid of the orphanage kids and starts a campaign to elect Powell without Collins' backing. He returns with criminal evidence against Collins but suppresses it in a secret deal with Collins for his support. Robert Keith, a newspaperman friend, learns of the deal and so informs June. Disillusioned, she returns the engagement ring Powell had given her. Her attitude makes Powell see the light and, in a courageous radio address, he denounces Collins after admitting the deal with him. His conscience clear, Powell drives to the ranch to meet June. En route, he comes across an escaped lion whom he mistakenly believes is June's pet. He prods the snarling beast into his car and then faints dead away when Kellaway comes on the scene and reveals the truth. While Kellaway gets the beast into a cage, Powell revives sufficiently to take June in his arms.

It was produced and directed by Norman Panama and Melvin Frank from their own screenplay, based on a story by Robert Carson.

Suitable for the family.

pay fifty per cent of the cost of inserting these ads in the exhibitor's local newspaper. The ads, entitled "Your Pleasure is Mine" and "I'm the Proudest Man in Town," are designed as a personal message from the exhibitor to his community. Copies of these ads are published in the Guide.

Copies of the Showman's Guide to Better Business are available from your 20th Century-Fox representative. It contains a wealth of information that no exhibitor can afford to be without.

On Thursday, too late for inclusion in this report, the meeting was to be devoted to an open forum discussion of showmanship based on the plan of action proposed by Twentieth Century-Fox, with Mitchell Wolfson, of Wometco Theatres, as moderator. A report of this open forum will be made in the next issue.

Limited space does not permit comment on the fine talks made at the opening session by Al Lichtman, Andy Smith, Jr., Charles Einfeld and other Fox executives, as well as by Eric Johnston, MPA president, Bosley Crowther, motion picture critic of the *New York Times*, Sam Pinanski, head of TOA, and Truman Rembusch, National Allied president. Suffice it to say that all lauded Spyros P. Skouras and his aides for taking the leadership in doing something positive, at great expense to their company, to combat the box-office slump, a view that was enthusiastically shared by all the exhibitors in attendance.

A highlight of the meeting was the welcoming address of Mr. Skouras. Constructive and to the point, the speech made a deep impression on his listeners, and it should be read by every exhibitor for a better understanding of why he must exert greater showmanship efforts to restore our prestige and regain our former patronage. Mr. Skouras' speech follows:

"I want to welcome all of you, from the bottom of my heart, and I am indeed very grateful that you have accepted our invitation to participate in this heart to heart talk. This meeting is in accordance with the democratic traditions that has characterized the American private enterprise system.

"Today, this free competitive system of our country stands out as a beacon to a world whose freedom has been greatly impaired by the ravages of war and the threat of communism. All enterprise and all economies have been dislocated with fantastically rising costs.

"I do not want to talk to you about politics, but these global changes, affecting the freedom of man, have a bearing upon this session. The reason this meeting has been created is because, as freemen of the greatest democratic nation of the world, we are affected just like other large industries in America which have been discussing the future success of their enterprises and have been retooling in order that our competitive system may thrive.

"We are here to do what we can to help readjust our own industry to the changing modern world.

"We have been fortunate in the exhibition field of motion picture entertainment because long ago we built up a strong and enviable edifice which has withstood many of the adverse economic developments of the times. As exhibitors, our showmanship helped to erect this mighty structure which we were inclined to think was a Gibraltar against any adverse conditions.

"But during the war years, the attendance in our theatres was raised to abnormal levels because the public had no other form of entertainment so easily at hand. Pockets were bulging and people wanted relaxation from the strains of war; so our theatres were filled and our boxoffices were besieged. Those methods of showmanship, and those techniques which the exhibitors of the nation used to build up this great industry were put aside during these lush years. It was felt that no effort was needed to bring patrons into the theatres.

"Now the boxoffice has returned to normalcy, and we all know that normalcy is not sufficient in view of the high costs of this dislocation I have mentioned which have made people more conscious of the purchasing power of their dollar, and especially of their entertainment dollar.

"Our business is also faced with a competition by other forms of recreation, and we again must be on our toes.

"This meeting is dedicated to the sole purpose of helping to inspire the theatremen of America to show the way to industrial prosperity in general, and motion picture prosperity in particular, by again creating methods and systems of showmanship.

"Our imagination must be brought into play in order to set examples for the rest of the nation in the crisis that is facing all industries, including our own.

"While the effects of this crisis has not yet been felt in the exhibiting branch, as much as in the other branches of motion picture entertainment, I feel, and have long felt, that it was my great obligation and duty to my former associates, the exhibitors, who have contributed so much to our industry, to face with them squarely a new challenge with a dynamic showmanship.

"As men who have generated a vogue that has spread around the world by building great palaces for the amusement of the millions—monuments to showmanship—you demonstrate by your presence here that you recognize the momentous purposes of this rally.

"I appeal to you today—to you exhibitors who have changed the ways of life, styles and habits of populations throughout the world, to begin here and now to create a renaissance of the showmanship spirit that has produced such miracles in the past.

"You are the men who can do it. You represent a great tradition. By creating plans and ideas to capture the modern mood of entertainment-seekers, you can increase the patronage of your theatres and guarantee that our proud industry will flourish and continue to serve our communities and nation.

"As hosts of this meeting, 20th Century-Fox has prepared suggestions and ideas which we are going to submit to you. We are going to ask you to propose your own, and we hope that our joint effort will represent an achievement of everlasting benefit to show business.

"Showmanship, and showmanship alone, is the keynote of these proceedings. We are meeting here in the interests of every one of you, and our whole industry—not for 20th Century-Fox alone.

"You are asked to participate as individuals, regardless of your particular affiliations or your geographical locations. Our prime and overwhelming purpose is to help create the habit of movie-going among a vastly larger segment of the American people.

"Never was there a higher challenge to any group of men in all the annals of American business. We are asking you to sit down with us to a job of hard work, because you are the men who have made showmanship a by-word all over the world. You are the pioneers who have invented the art of exploitation, making the motion picture theatre a warm and inviting institution in every community. You are the pioneers who started out with the nickleodeon and with your vision developed methods which enabled your neighbors to learn to love and patronize motion pictures on a scale beyond any entertainment medium in all history.

"You are the men who did not stop until your showmanship created audiences spanning the face of the earth; until a theatre stood at every cross-roads; until governments and whole peoples looked to the motion picture industry as an auxiliary to the peace and well being of humanity.

"You are the men who have seen industry after industry, year after year, borrow and adapt to their own purposes the very techniques you devised as a means of exploiting their products. You are the men who have been attacked for using so-called methods of ballyhoo, but you also have had the satisfaction of seeing showmanship extend far beyond the confines of show business and earn the respect of all business men.

"By your efforts, the American motion picture industry today represents a capital investment of two billion, six hundred and four million dollars. You are the men who have mortgaged your families and yourselves; you are the men who endorsed the bonds and sweated out the mortgages; you are the men who truly made the motion picture one of the largest industries of the world and one of the necessities of life.

"For this great contribution we have called this meeting today simply to muster all the strength of our hearts and minds to preserve this magnificent institution your labors and talents have created.

"As a theatremen, I take immense pride in standing before you to offer you the cooperation of 20th Century-Fox and to ask for your own toward the re-creation of the strong and irresistible showmanship that has made us great.

"I am filled with emotion, because I feel, as you do, the magnificent opportunity that beckons to us here today. This opportunity calls for the highest courage and boldest imagination; it calls for hard work.

"In the name of all those whose welfare depends on us, let us resolve to put every iota of strength and intelligence into this common cause."

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20TH CENTURY-FOX POINTS THE WAY!

If ever a film company deserved a pat on the back it is 20th Century-Fox, not only because of its awareness in recognizing the need for a return to aggressive showmanship to stimulate theatre attendance, but also because it is doing something about the problem by sponsoring a showmanship drive at tremendous expense to itself. The company has a right to be proud in the knowledge that it is doing the entire industry a great service.

The showmanship meeting sponsored by the company in Chicago on March 8 and 9 was highly successful in every sense of the word, and great credit is due Spyros P. Skouras, Al Lichtman, Andy Smith, Jr., Charles Einfeld and all the other top company executives for the masterly way in which they handled the meeting. Their sincerity of purpose was quickly recognized by the more than 350 exhibitors who attended the conference, and throughout the two-day sessions all were fired with genuine enthusiasm as they listened to an outline of the showmanship program laid down by the company and to the flood of ideas and suggestions offered by the numerous speakers. Every one departed from the meeting inspired with a determination to roll up his sleeves and recapture the old order of spirited merchandising by which to sell the motion picture and the theatres to the public.

The meeting was so inspirational that prominent circuit heads, such as Sam Pinanski, president of TOA, Bob O'Donnell, of Interstate Theatres, Louis Schine, of the Schine Circuit, Si Fabian, of Fabian Theatres, Leonard Goldenson, of United Paramount Theatres, Charles Skouras, head of National Theatres, Oscar Doob, of Loew's Theatres, and a host of others took the rostrum and openly declared to the assemblage that they were going back to their offices to make an all-out effort to rekindle the spark of showmanship in their personnel.

Because of the unbridled enthusiasm shown by all the exhibitors who attended the Chicago meeting, Mr. Skouras, at the close of the meeting, announced that his company will sponsor in every exchange area during the period March 21-23 similar one-day showmanship conferences, to which all exhibitors in the area are invited. Division and branch managers will preside at the regional meetings, with the agenda following that of the two-day meeting held in Chicago.

Arrangements have been made for prominent exhibitors, a local motion picture critic, and TOA and Allied leaders to address each meeting, which will be attended also by Home Office representatives and field exploiters, who will present the 20th Century-Fox showmanship plan, which was the basis of discussion at the Chicago conference. The afternoon sessions of the meetings will be devoted to open forum discussions.

Thus far regional showmanship meetings have been set in 29 of the company's exchange centers, on the following dates:

Dallas, March 23; Pittsburgh, March 23; St. Louis, March 21; Washington, March 21; New Haven, March 23; Kansas City, March 22; Charlotte, March 23; Cleveland, March 21; Des Moines, March 21; Indianapolis, March 21; Memphis, March 21; Minneapolis, March 23; Philadelphia,

March 21; Milwaukee, March 23; Oklahoma City, March 22; New Orleans, March 23; Omaha, March 23; Detroit, March 21; Los Angeles, March 21; Denver, March 23; New York, March 23; Salt Lake City, March 23; Albany, March 21; Atlanta, March 21; Boston, March 23; Buffalo, March 21; Cincinnati, March 23; Portland, March 23; and San Francisco, March 23.

HARRISON'S REPORTS cannot urge too strongly that every exhibitor who can possibly do so should make it his business to attend the showmanship meeting in his territory. A revival of the old showmanship spirit is needed more than ever this year because of the serious drop in theatre attendance, and the 20th Century-Fox showmanship plan offers ideas and suggestions that can be utilized to advantage by every theatre, regardless of the size or type, and regardless of which company's pictures are played. Moreover, the different speakers, fresh from the meeting in Chicago, will convey to you opinions on such matters as special television trailers, proper methods of pre-selling pictures, institutional advertising, showmanship methods employed in small towns, and a wealth of other pertinent information. As Charles Skouras observed in his talk before the Chicago assemblage: "This is just like going to college; we've had an education here today."

It should not be necessary to urge any exhibitor to attend these forthcoming showmanship meetings, for those who fail to attend will be doing themselves a great disservice.

The 20th Century-Fox slogan, "1950 Business Will Be Good For Those Who Make It Good," will come true for those who are willing to roll up their sleeves and go to work. The money and the customers are there, but, to quote Charlie Einfeld, "You must go after them!"

ASCAP CONSENT DECREE TOTAL VICTORY FOR EXHIBITION

In an amended consent decree between the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) and the Department of Justice, entered in the U. S. District Court in New York this week, the decision won by the exhibitors over ASCAP in 1948 was not only upheld in its entirety but made even more complete by the fact that ASCAP and its members are enjoined from suing any exhibitor for performance rights to music in any motion picture produced since Judge Vincent L. Liebell handed down his decision in 1948. Since then, exhibitors have refused to pay any tax to ASCAP on the ground that such payments are illegal exactions, but there has been some uncertainty as to whether or not they were leaving themselves open to a lawsuit. The new judgment clearly frees the exhibitors from any liability.

The amended consent decree stems from the anti-trust suit brought against ASCAP by 164 exhibitor members of the Independent Theatre Owners' Association, which suit resulted in the 1948 decision by which ASCAP was judged to be a monopoly in restraint of trade and enjoined from collecting a music tax from theatres for performance rights to music recorded on film.

Mr. Milton C. Weisman, the prominent New York attorney who successfully conducted the suit for the ITOA, had this to say in a statement issued following the entry of the decree:

(Continued on back page)

"The Winslow Boy" with Robert Donat, Margaret Leighton and Cedric Hardwicke

(Eagle-Lion, no rel. date set; time, 97 min.)

Based on Terence Rattigan's successful play of the same name, "The Winslow Boy" is a compelling British-made drama, marked by outstanding performances by Robert Donat and Cedric Hardwicke who are both known to American picture-goers. But as entertainment it seems more suited to class audiences than to the masses, for it is like a photographed stage play—all dialogue and no movement. Moreover, many movie-goers will have difficulty understanding the thick British accents of some of the players.

The story, which is based on a famous *cause celebre* of the late 1800's, revolves around a 14-year-old cadet who is expelled from the Royal Naval College for theft. His father, a retired middle-class bank manager, played by Hardwicke, believes the boy innocent and fights for his honor, first through the Admiralty and then in the House of Commons, but the Attorney General refuses to grant him the right of a civil trial. The struggle seems hopeless until Robert Donat, a famous lawyer and member of Parliament takes up the challenge in the boy's behalf. His brilliant speech in Commons results in a Petition of Right being granted, thus enabling Hardwicke as a private citizen to sue the Admiralty and fight the case in the Lord Chief Justice's Court. Bitterly fought for more than two years, the case attracts nationwide attention and proves embarrassing to Hardwicke's family, particularly to his daughter (Margaret Leighton), who is compelled to break her engagement to a young neighbor. Hardwicke becomes ill and his savings dwindle because of the costly litigation, but he refuses to abandon the fight. In due time Donat wins a brilliant court victory, completely vindicating the boy. Hardwicke looks upon the vindication as well worth the sacrifices made by him and his family. It ends with a hint of romance between Margaret and Donat.

The most absorbing parts of the picture are the debates in Parliament and the court room trial in which Donat matches wits with Francis L. Sullivan, the prosecuting attorney. But all this will best be appreciated by mature audiences, who will find it to be an effective dramatic presentation involving the rights and liberties of the common man.

It was produced by Anatole de Grunwald, who collaborated on the screen play with Terence Rattigan. Anthony Asquith directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Tarnished" with Dorothy Patrick, Arthur Franz and Barbara Fuller

(Republic, Feb. 28; time, 60 min.)

Fair program entertainment. Its story about an inherently honest young man who struggles to live down a bad reputation he had earned as a youth is basically familiar, but it holds one's attention throughout because of the deft direction and the competent performances. Considerable sympathy is felt for Arthur Franz, as the young man who tries hard to win the acceptance of the narrow-minded townspeople, and for Dorothy Patrick, who courageously defies even her prejudiced father to help him. Their romance is pleasant and inspiring. There is some excitement in the closing scenes, where Franz rescues from a blazing warehouse Jimmy Lydon, who had tried to frame him for a series of robberies:—

Returning to his home town after an absence of seven years, Arthur Franz tries to live down the fact that he had been sent to prison for a youthful escapade. Franz, who had spent the previous four years with the Marines, refuses to cash in on his war record and allows the prejudiced townspeople to believe that he had been in prison all the time. After being humiliated and rebuffed time and again, Franz lands a job in Harry Shannon's boat yard with the aid of Dorothy Patrick, a cannery worker, who sympathized with him. Franz progresses nicely but arouses the jealousy of Byron Barr, personnel manager of the cannery, who had an eye on Dorothy himself. Seeing an opportunity to blame Franz for robberies he and Jimmy Lydon, Shannon's son,

had been committing, Barr plants Franz's Marine combat knife at the scene of their latest crime. Franz, accused, denies the robbery, but his alibi is weak because, on the night of the crime, he and Dorothy had gone to Vermont in an unsuccessful attempt to get married without a waiting period. Knowing that no one would believe that their trip was an innocent one, Franz, rather than clear himself at the expense of Dorothy's reputation, prepares to submit to arrest. Meanwhile Lydon, in the act of robbing a warehouse with Barr, gets caught in a bear trap set by the owner. Barr, trying to pry Lydon loose, accidentally starts a fire and runs out on Lydon to save himself. Franz, risking his own life, rushes into the burning building and saves Lydon. Cleared by the truth about the robberies, Franz wins the admiration of the whole town.

It was produced by Sidney Picker and directed by Harry Keller from a screen play by John K. Butler, based on a novel by Eleanor R. Mayo. The cast includes Barbara Fuller, Don Beddoe and others.

Suitable for the family.

"Singing Guns" with Vaughn Monroe, Ella Raines and Walter Brennan

(Republic, Feb. 28; time, 91 min.)

Replete with action and enhanced by Trucolor photography, this Western should have no trouble keeping the avid cowboy fans entertained, for it has all the tried and true ingredients they enjoy. But what sets it aside from most Westerns is the fact that it stars Vaughn Monroe, the band leader and crooner, whose wide popularity should have a telling effect at the box-office. Many people who are not drawn by Western fare may go out of their way to see Monroe in this one. And they will not be disappointed, for he does surprisingly well as an outlaw who becomes regenerated, even though the story material is routine. Needless to say, he sings several songs, including the popular "Mule Train." Ella Raines, as a cafe owner, Walter Brennan, as a kindly doctor, and Ward Bond, as the sheriff, are competent in standard characterizations. The one criticism that should be made is the unnecessary insertion of double-meaning dialogue:—

Monroe, a notorious outlaw with a price on his head, shoots and severely wounds Bond, who had been tracking him for many months. Not a killer, Monroe takes Bond to Brennan, who persuades him to submit to a blood transfusion that saves Bond's life. Monroe wakes up from a deep, drugged sleep and discovers that his heavy beard had been shaved off and his clothes changed, giving him a new appearance. Brennan explains that he wanted to give him a new start in life and induces him to assume a new name and to take over the job as sheriff until Bond recovers. Learning that a local mining company owned by Jeff Corey was preparing to make a large shipment of gold, Monroe decides to stick to the job until he can make off with the loot. Monroe had already stolen considerable gold from the company because it had jumped his claims. In the course of events Monroe becomes romantically involved with Ella, Bond's girl-friend, who recognizes him as the outlaw and so informs Bond in order to collect the reward. Brennan, confessing that he had hoped to turn Monroe into an honest man, persuades Bond not to arrest him until he has had a chance to accomplish his aim. By the time Monroe is ready to pull off the gold robbery, he falls deeply in love with Ella and decides to go straight. But a situation arises that compels Bond to jail Monroe to save him from a lynch mob headed by Corey. He allows Ella to help Monroe escape so that she may learn the location of his hideout and the stolen gold. Rather than give this information to Bond and bring about Monroe's arrest, Ella, upon reaching the hideout, knocks Monroe unconscious and takes the gold to the Governor. Her action results in a pardon for Monroe, enabling both of them to look forward to a happy, straightforward life together.

It was produced by Abe Lyman and directed by R. G. Springsteen from a screen play by Dorrell and Stuart McGowan, based on a novel by Max Brand.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Under My Skin" with John Garfield and Micheline Puelle

(20th Century-Fox, March; time, 86 min.)

An interesting horse-racing melodrama, based on Ernest Hemingway's short story, "My Old Man." Revolving around an unscrupulous jockey who is idolized by his young son, the story, though hardboiled in many respects because of the crooked racing angle, has moments of tenderness that are charged with emotional appeal. The picture, in fact, has many emotional situations, the result of the devotion and loyalty between father and son. The action takes place in Italy and France, and the actual Parisian backgrounds give the film a colorful flavor. The racing sequences and the hero's involvements with a crooked gambler make for considerable excitement and suspense. John Garfield is highly competent as the tough but tender jockey, and Orley Lindgren, as his son, is exceptionally good. The picture marks the American debut of Micheline Puelle, a popular and beautiful French actress, who does very well as the cabaret singer who feels sympathetic to the motherless youngster and falls in love with his father:—

Garfield, a veteran jockey barred from American tracks because of his unscrupulous ways, is forced to flee from Italy with Orley, his 11-year-old son, after double-crossing Luther Adler, a gambler, in a fixed race. They go to Paris, where Garfield had sent his trunks in care of a friend who owned a cafe. Arriving at the cafe, Garfield is berated by Micheline Puelle, who turns out to be his friend's widow; she blames him for her husband's death because he had involved him with racetrack characters. While Garfield goes to retrieve his trunks, which Micheline had sent away, she feels sorry for young Orley and takes him to her apartment for dinner. Within a few days Garfield buys a horse and starts to train him as a steeplechase racer. Meanwhile a strong bond grows up between Micheline and the boy, and before long she finds herself falling in love with Garfield. Trouble looms when Adler and two of his henchmen arrive in Paris and give Garfield a limited time to pay up the losses in Italy. Garfield makes up some of the money on a fixed race. His son, detecting the fix, loses respect for him. Garfield decides to send the youngster back to America, but the lad, devoted to his father, returns to him. In due time Garfield's horse becomes the favorite to win the Grand Prix, and Adler, threatening to kill Garfield, orders him to throw the race. Realizing that his son had his heart set on their horse winning, Garfield rides an honest race and wins. But as the horse streaks across the finish line another horse crashes into him, causing Garfield to take a fall that brings about his death.

Casey Robinson wrote the screen play and produced it. Jean Negulesco directed it. Unobjectionable morally.

"Tarzan and the Slave Girl" with Lex Barker, Vanessa Brown and Denise Darcel

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 74 min.)

This latest of the "Tarzan" pictures should go over well wherever the series is a favorite. The story, of course, is completely fantastic, but the indiscriminating adventure-loving fans who do not mind pictures that are more melodramatic than credible should find the bang-up pace exciting and packed with thrills, for the action is replete with mayhem, double-dyed villainy and heroic deeds of assorted kinds. Lex Barker, as Tarzan, adequately fills the demands of the role. The production is enhanced by a bevy of easy-to-look-at "slave girls," among whom is Denise Darcel, of "Battleground" fame:—

When the natives of Tarzan's jungle become terrified by the mysterious disappearance of the bride of the chief's son, Tarzan traces the girl and finds that she had been kidnapped by members of the Lionian tribe, whose numbers had been depleted by a strange malady. The disease is contracted by several of the natives and Tarzan saves them by summoning a doctor who inoculates them with a serum he had developed. Tarzan determines to rescue the girl, and the doctor decides to go along so as to treat the epidemic at its source. With Tarzan gone, the Lionians return and kidnap

Vanessa Brown, his wife, Denise Darcel, the doctor's nurse, as well as seven other girls, and take them to Hurd Hatfield, their Prince, who was despondent over the illness of his little son. Aware that they had been kidnapped to replenish the Lionian population, Vanessa and Denise manage to escape from the slave quarters and hide themselves in the tomb of the Prince's father, a recent victim of the deadly disease. Tarzan and the doctor, arriving in the Lionian city, inform the Prince that they can save his son with the serum, but both are thrown into a dungeon when it is discovered that they had lost the serum en route. Tarzan battles his way free and escapes to the tomb, where he discovers Vanessa and Denise. Through brute strength and with the aid of elephant friends, he breaks out of the tomb after it had been sealed and gets into a violent battle before he is subdued. Meanwhile Cheeta, Tarzan's pet chimpanzee, had found the lost serum, enabling the doctor to save the Prince's son. Just as Tarzan is about to be thrown to the lions, the Prince arrives on the scene and frees him together with the girls.

It was produced by Sol Lesser and directed by Lee Sholem from a screen play by Hans Jacoby and Arnold Belgard. The cast includes Arthur Shields, Robert Alda, Tony Caruso, Robert Warwick and others. Suitable for the family.

"The Big Hangover" with Van Johnson and Elizabeth Taylor

(MGM, May; time, 82 min.)

Although this is an expensive production, it is only mildly entertaining. The reason for it is that the story, which revolves around an idealistic young lawyer, is weak. There is some comedy here and there. Part of it is slapstick, and other parts are provoked by the practical jokes played on Van Johnson who, because of a strange allergy to liquor, is sent into headspins by alcohol that is placed in his food. The most outstanding situation is at the alumni dinner where Leon Ames, as the city attorney, defending himself against a charge of dishonesty by Van, accuses capable law students of refusing to apply for positions as assistant district attorneys so as to protect the interests of the citizens. The action is slow in many spots:—

Upon his graduation from college with high honors, Van Johnson is taken into a distinguished law firm headed by Percy Waram. He joins a surprise birthday party given to Waram in the office and is induced to drink to the boss' health. He immediately becomes wildly intoxicated and is saved from disgrace by Elizabeth Taylor, Waram's daughter. He explains to her that he is allergic to liquor, the result of a war experience, during which he was almost drowned by bursting barrels of brandy while in the cellar of a French monastery hit by a Nazi bomb. Elizabeth, a student of psychiatry, takes an interest in him. He tries to cure himself by taking a teaspoonful of brandy every night, but in the course of the experiment he believes that his dog is talking to him. When he informs Elizabeth of this experience, she tells him that his sub-conscious mind had been playing a trick on him. Johnson visits Elizabeth's home and, after a talk with him, her parents become impressed with the fact that he is a young man of high ideals. But his ideals get him into trouble when he becomes shocked over the fact that the law firm, which was not averse to using its position for profit, was evicting a distinguished Chinese doctor from an apartment it owned. At an alumni dinner attended by all the members of the firm, including Elizabeth, Johnson denounces Leon Ames for failing to protect the interests of the Chinese doctor, and accuses him of currying favor with Waram's law firm to obtain a better paying job. All are shocked by Johnson's outburst, but Ames justifies himself by explaining that no capable lawyer applies for the job of his assistant to enable him to combat the brilliant members of Waram's firm. Convinced that Ames was honest but handicapped, Johnson resigns from the firm and accepts the position of assistant to Ames. Elizabeth, proud of Johnson, determines to marry him.

The story was written, produced and directed by Norman Krasna. The cast includes Fay Holden, Edgar Buchanan, Selenia Royle, Gene Lockhart and others.

Unobjectionable for family audiences.

"We are pleased to announce that by the entry of an Amended Consent Decree against ASCAP, the vacation of the judgment against ASCAP in the Alden-Rochelle case, and the withdrawal of all appeals therefrom by all parties, all objectives heretofore sought by the Independent Theatre Owners' Association, the plaintiffs in the Alden-Rochelle case, and motion picture exhibitors generally throughout the industry have been achieved. The disposition achieved under the leadership and the direction of ITOA exhibitors in this manner and with this most favorable result brings stability to the industry, quells any claims that could be made against any of the exhibitors relative to the performing rights of music synchronized with motion picture films and releases the motion picture exhibitors of America—not only the plaintiffs—from any payment to or exaction by ASCAP for public performing rights for ASCAP music integrated with motion picture films. A more complete victory or a broader one for the motion picture exhibition industry could hardly be envisaged or hoped for.

"Before this settlement and disposition was agreed upon by the Attorney-General, the ITOA, the defendant, ASCAP and the plaintiffs in the Alden-Rochelle suit a complete legal and factual survey of the entire ASCAP set-up and its relation to all users of music was carefully and painstakingly made with particular attention to safeguarding and assuring the rights of motion picture exhibitors in relation to the public performance of music synchronized and integrated with films to the end of making certain that such music may be freely and publicly performed by them, freely obtained by the producer, cleared at the source and all without charge to the exhibitor. All of the foregoing—has been fully, adequately and carefully assured by the presently consummated arrangements herein referred to.

"The new consent decree has radically and fundamentally changed the entire ASCAP set-up and compels and assures the clearance of all ASCAP music—both synchronization and public performance rights—at the source with the producers of the films. This was the cornerstone of the exhibitors' quarrel with ASCAP—this splitting of synchronization rights and public performance rights and separate exactions for them on the one hand from the producer and on the other hand from the exhibitor—this is now a thing of the past. Under the Amended Consent Decree, exhibitors will get the public performance rights of all ASCAP music integrated in the film directly from the producer included in the one right to exhibit the films. Exhibitors will no longer be required to deal with ASCAP nor with ASCAP members for the motion picture performance rights of music synchronized on film. Thus all of the protection which the exhibitors in the Alden-Rochelle case ever sought is granted not alone to them but to all exhibitors under the Consent Decree.

"Furthermore, the new Consent Decree removes a source of uncertainty which had been troubling the industry, to wit, the public performance rights to motion pictures which had been produced between the date of Judge Liebell's decree in our Alden-Rochelle case and the termination of the pending appeals therefrom.

"Under the Amended Consent Decree this troublesome and vexatious situation is quieted since neither ASCAP nor its members may sue any exhibitor for performing the music in any film which was synchronized in the past or to which music the performance rights had been granted to the producer. Furthermore, the Consent Decree also clears the producer from any claims in relation to such music since it provides that in relation to all past pictures already produced the producer will obtain the music performance rights to all such music in pictures which have been produced in the past upon their obtaining rights with relation to future produced pictures.

"Furthermore, as to pictures that may hereafter be produced, no problem to vex the exhibitor can arise because the Amended Consent Decree provides that whenever a member of ASCAP grants a producer the synchronization rights of his music, arrangements must also be made whereby the producer obtains the performance rights either from such member or from ASCAP.

"As an additional protection to the industry generally—really to the producer in whom, of course, the exhibitor is interested—the producer is now free to deal, if he wishes, directly with the individual member of ASCAP and is not restricted to dealing with ASCAP. All restrictions upon the right of a member to individually grant performing rights to the producer have been completely removed and a producer may deal as he sees fit—either with ASCAP or with the member of ASCAP in relation to public performance rights to so-called ASCAP music.

"Furthermore, the power of ASCAP to exact any improper or inordinate charges for public performing rights is removed since the Amended Consent Decree provides that if a producer is not satisfied with the fee asked by ASCAP therefor, the producer may have the fee fixed by the Court.

"Finally, no member of ASCAP, nor ASCAP, may at any time in the future bring any action against any exhibitor in relation to public performance of music synchronized on film.

"In conclusion it must be said—with all humility—that the motion picture exhibitors' quarrel with the ASCAP set-up, the ASCAP exactions—has been resolved completely and entirely in favor of the exhibitor who is now completely freed therefrom."

Although the ITOA has not been alone in this fight against ASCAP's music monopoly, the organization rates the thanks of every independent exhibitor for the relentless way in which it pressed its legal battle against the Society. And in giving thanks let us not forget Mr. Weisman, whose capable handling of the case brought about this great victory for the independent exhibitors.

MYERS SEES ADDED HOPE FOR TAX REPEAL

The defeat on a strict party vote of the Republican move for an immediate cut in the excise taxes was to be expected, according to a bulletin issued this week by Abram F. Myers, chairman of COMPO's Committee on Taxation and Legislation. The most the industry could have hoped for on such a move, added Myers, was that the war rate on admissions would be eliminated.

Myers stated that the Eberharter resolution, adopted by the House Ways and Means Committee on Monday, goes far beyond the Republican move, for it provides that the Committee shall examine the excise taxes to "select for reduction or repeal" not only the wartime excises but also other excise taxes (a) that are regressive; (b) that enter into business costs; or (c) that have discriminatory competitive effects.

"Regressive" refers to taxes the burden of which is relatively greater upon those with small incomes than upon those in the upper brackets. That the tax on movie tickets is regressive is one of the strongest points made in the joint statement filed with the Ways and Means Committee by Mr. Myers and Gael Sullivan. That the ticket tax has a discriminatory competitive effect was also urged on the Committee in the joint statement.

As for the second category, taxes that enter into business costs, Myers feels that it may open the way for consideration of the tax on raw stock.

The adoption of the Eberharter resolution "is definitely encouraging," said Mr. Myers. "No one now seems to doubt that some measure of ticket tax relief will be forthcoming. The remaining area of doubt is as to whether there will be a mere reduction or outright repeal. All industry members should now redouble their efforts. It is not enough for them to urge their Congressmen to support total repeal. They should petition them to work actively to that end."

A meeting of Mr. Myers' Committee was scheduled for this Thursday to hear a report of the work done and the progress made thus far in the tax battle, with particular attention paid to the accomplishments in each territory so that prompt action can be taken to strengthen any weak spots that may appear. "The over-all picture is excellent," said Mr. Myers, "but some territories have done better than others and the Committee will press for a 100% performance in all."

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HOW SOME HOLLYWOOD EXECUTIVES FEEL ABOUT TELEVISION

Hollywood—Last week I had luncheon with Sid Rogell, head of RKO production in Hollywood under Howard Hughes, for the purpose of ascertaining how he and perhaps other production executives feel about television. He told me that if any one thinks that television is not competition to motion pictures he is way wrong. But, he said, no one need despair as to the future of the industry. Perhaps, he said, we shall have to work a little harder, and cut down expenses at the same time, but he feels sure that we are going to survive.

The first thing that should be done, said Mr. Rogell, is to take advantage of television by making it work for us through trailers. An attractive trailer cannot help arousing the interest of those who see it on a television set, thus inducing them to attend their nearest theatre to see the picture. And the exhibitors, he said, must work harder to attract more people into the theatres. It is up to us, he assured me, to hold on to the present patronage and to keep adding to it by proper exploitation.

One other thing we must do, he said, is to stop telling our friends and others that pictures are bad and that business is poor. Mr. Rogell related to me an interesting incident: "I had dinner," he said, "with one of the foremost screen writers, who told me that, having no worthwhile pictures to see the day before, he went to a vaudeville theatre with his friends. I told him perhaps he did not look over the advertisements carefully and I picked up that day's newspaper to see what was playing. I saw many outstanding pictures advertised and asked him whether he had seen any of them. When he said that he had not, I asked him to stop berating motion pictures without any justification since he himself is making a living out of the business."

Finally, he said, our stars must stop demanding exorbitant salaries so that they may help us make more pictures with what they give up. The same goes, he said, for the studio executives—they must reduce their salaries.

Mr. Rogell told me that he is having manufactured buttons with the wording "Booster" to pin on the lapel of a person's coat. He expects every one of his friends to wear one, and when any one should ask the wearer of a button what he is boosting, his answer will be: "Moving pictures," adding that they are better than ever.

Mr. Rogell's decision to have booster buttons made and passed around to his friends is a wise one, and others in the industry will do well to follow his lead.

The evening of that day I had dinner with William Beaudine, Sr., the well known director, and I asked him to express his views on television. He replied: "I wouldn't have any part of it. They are now trying to use us—they don't offer any money to speak of, but when they put television on its feet they will pass us by. It will be at least five years before they will be in a position to spend money for good entertainment."

The following day I had luncheon with Harry Thomas, the independent producer; he had attended a meeting where Commander Eugene F. MacDonald, president of Zenith Radio, made a talk to some prominent Hollywood people in connection with his company's Phonevision. Commander MacDonald, of course, is intensely interested in the project and thinks that, when Phonevision gets going, it will supplant picture and radio entertainment. But Mr. Thomas, like many of the others who were present, feels that the Commander has oversold himself, and that the picture business will go on just the same.

Commander MacDonald has made a deal with the telephone company in Chicago for testing about one hundred telephones, fitted with Phonevision, next September. He does not want new films, he said; one year old subjects will do.

On Saturday evening, I attended at Long Beach, a St. Patrick's party, given by Dr. Richard Johnson, an intimate friend of our late friend, Al Steffes, and met a Dr. Paap, who expressed the opinion that the moving picture has nothing to fear from television. If anything, he said, television will help make more picture patrons.

Such is one layman's theory.

Discussing the matter with Mike Vogel, one of the outstanding exploitation men in the business, he cited a case that has come within his own observation: "One of our neighbors," he said, "has had a television set for more than one and one-half years. All the children of our neighborhood, including my own two sons, used to congregate there to watch the television shows. Now not one of them bothers to go."

Personally, I believe that this fear about the industry being on the brink of disaster is mostly unjustified, and that the exhibitors, with a little harder work and with the aid of better pictures, will pry people away from their television sets.

BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES

The previous box-office performances were published in the March 11, 1950 issue:

Eagle-Lion

"Port of New York": Fair
"The Sundowners": Fair
"Never Fear": Fair
"Sarumba": Poor
"Salt to the Devil" (formerly "Give Us This Day"): Fair
"Guilty of Treason": Good-Fair
Six pictures have been checked with the following results:
Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 4; Poor, 1.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"That Forsyte Woman": Fair
"Adam's Rib": Good
"Tension": Fair-Poor
"Challenge to Lassie": Fair-Poor
"On the Town": Very Good-Good
"Johnny Eager" (reissue): Fair
"Malaya": Good-Fair
"Ambush": Good-Fair
"Battleground": Excellent-Very Good
"East Side West Side": Good-Fair
"Blossoms in the Dust" (reissue): Fair-Poor
"Key to the City": Good-Fair

Twelve pictures have been checked with the following results: Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 4; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 3.

Paramount

"Chicago Deadline": Fair
"Red, Hot and Blue": Fair
"Holiday Inn" (reissue): Fair
"The Lady Eve" (reissue): Fair
"The Great Lover": Good
"File on Thelma Jordan": Good-Fair
"Captain China": Fair
"Dear Wife": Good

Eight pictures have been checked with the following results: Good, 2; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 5.

(Continued on back page)

"Beauty on Parade" with Lola Albright, Robert Hutton and Ruth Warrick

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 67 min.)

An exceptionally good program picture. It apparently was produced as a "B" picture, but its excellent quality must have surprised the studio. This is owed to a fine story and script, and equally fine direction. It may very well turn out to be a "sleeper." It has been a long time since so many beautiful girls appeared in the same picture, and with such good taste; there is no vulgarity anywhere. The producer has succeeded in basing his beauty contests upon a story with a moral and, as a result, the picture should please, not only the 'teen-agers, but also their elders. The acting is very good. John Ridgely's efforts to dissuade his wife's ambitions for their daughter to satisfy her own frustration wins the audience's sympathy. Ruth Warrick, as the scheming mother, is excellent, as is Lola Albright, as the daughter:—

Ruth wins a beauty contest but, instead of trying for the national finals and the title of Miss U.S.A., she marries Ridgely and lets Hillary Brooke, the runner-up, remain in the competition. Married for twenty years and frustrated because she had abandoned her opportunity to win fame and fortune, Ruth concentrates her attentions on her daughter, Lola, and, against her husband's wishes, enters Lola in a beauty contest. Lola plans to marry Jimmy Lloyd, but her mother does not agree with her plans and manages to inveigle her into trying for the national competition. Through trickery, she wins over Lloyd into cooperating in her scheme. Lola wins the contest and is interviewed by Robert Hutton, a newsman, who, hardboiled about beauty contests, advises her to marry and settle down so as to avoid eventual disillusionment. Ridgely feels keenly his wife's ambitions for their daughter, and loses his grip. Hutton, now in love with Lola, and seeing through her scheming mother, visits Ridgely to pep him up and to induce him to assert his authority. He finds him trying to drown his unhappiness by drinking. Meanwhile Lola transfers her interest from Lloyd to Hutton, and tells him how sorry she feels for not having taken her father's advice to quit the beauty contest. In the course of events, Lola wins the national contest, but, instead of accepting the cup presented to her, she reveals to the audience that her one ambition was to bring her parents, about to split up, together again, and that the prize should go to the runner-up because she (Lola) had disqualified herself by marrying Hutton the day before. Her parents return home together, their former harmony re-established.

It was produced by Wallace MacDonald and directed by Lew Landers from an original story by Arthur E. Orloff, who collaborated on the screen play with George Bricker. Suitable for the entire family.

"Our Very Own" with Ann Blyth, Farley Granger and Joan Evans

(Goldwyn-RKO, no rel. date set; time, 93 min.)

The production, which is up to the usual Samuel Goldwyn standard, is fine, but the story is only fair. The trouble with it is that it is depressing instead of inspiring. Not many picture-goers will enjoy hearing an envious sister reveal to her elder sister that she is only an adopted child. And the attitude of Ann Blyth, which is one of self pity, does not win her one's sympathy, particularly since her foster parents had been treating her as their own daughter. One resents the unhappiness she causes them because of the younger sister's indiscretion. Nor is the attempt of the younger sister to steal Ann's sweetheart a pleasurable sight. The tomboy antics of Natalie Wood, the ten-year-old daughter, get on one's nerves after a while; they are overdone. Jane Wyatt and Donald Cook look and act like real parents. The title, although it fits the story, is weak:—

Together with their three daughters (Ann Blyth, Joan Evans and Natalie Wood), Jane and Cook lead a peaceful family life. Ann, the eldest daughter, returns from high school one afternoon and finds Joan Evans, her younger sister, trying to make an impression on Farley Granger, her

(Ann's) boy-friend. Ann has it out with Joan after she makes several other obvious passes at Granger, but forgives her. The following week, while her mother is busy preparing for Ann's eighteenth birthday party, Joan asks for her birthday certificate to enable her to obtain a summer job. Without giving the matter much thought, Jane tells her to get it from a strong-box. Joan, while searching for her certificate, comes across legal papers revealing that Ann had been adopted as an infant, a secret Jane and Cook had kept to themselves. During another quarrel between Joan and Ann over Farley, Joan blurts out the fact that Ann is not her real sister and should not censure her. No length of explanations by Jane and Cook can restore Ann's peace of mind. Upon learning that her real mother, Ann Dvorak, was still alive, Ann insists upon visiting her. Jane arranges the meeting, and Ann is driven to Miss Dvorak's home by Phyllis Kirk, her friend, a rich girl who lacked a happy home life. The seedy atmosphere of her mother's home, and the fact that she is a complete stranger to her, bewilders Ann and makes her heartbreak doubly intense. She becomes morose and refuses to return home until persuaded to do so by Phyllis. Cook, who had been waiting for her, receives her with kindness, but slaps her when she becomes stubborn. It is not until Phyllis tells Ann what a lucky girl she is to have loving parents that she comes to the realization of what Jane and Cook meant to her. For her commencement address she tells what a wonderful thing it is to be one of a family. Her foster parents, including the contrite Joan, embrace Ann after graduation, happy in the knowledge that she had returned to them with a full heart.

It was produced by Samuel Goldwyn and directed by David Miller from a story and screen play by F. Hugh Herbert. The cast includes Gus Schilling and others.

Unobjectionable for the family.

"The Golden Twenties"

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 68 min.)

Compiled mainly of newsreel shots and of motion picture clips, this March of Time documentary feature is a highly interesting pictorial study of the highlights of the so-called "jazz age," from the close of World War I in 1918 to the Wall Street crash in 1929. It should make a very good supporting feature in double-billing houses, for all movie-goers, whether old or young, will be fascinated by the cavalcade of events and the many personalities depicted.

With five commentators, including Frederick L. Allen, Robert Q. Lewis, Allen Prescott, Red Barber and Elmer Davis, alternating as narrators, the picture is a graphic presentation of all the nonsense, hilarity, sensationalism and lawlessness of what was truly a fabulous era. Prohibition and the subsequent wave of speakeasies, racketeers and gangsterism; the progress of the automobile and the airplane; the labor strikes; the Charleston dance craze; the tremendous ovations and parades accorded to such personalities as Queen Marie of Roumania, the Prince of Wales, Charles Lindbergh and Trudy Ederle; the Scopes monkey trial, the Sacco-Vanzetti case, and the Hall-Mills murder trial; the famous stars such as Al Jolson, Lillian Russell, Gloria Swanson, Rudolph Valentino, Pola Negri, John Barrymore, Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin, Greta Garbo and John Gilbert, who added glamor to the stage and movie houses; the flapper fashions and the boyish bobs; the outstanding sports events such as the Dempsey-Firpo and Dempsey-Tunney fights, and the popular sports personalities such as Babe Ruth, Paavo Nurmi, Roger Hornsby, Bobby Jones, Helen Wills, Earle Sande, Red Grange, Albie Booth, Bill Tilden and many others; the Harding and Coolidge regimes; the Teapot Dome scandal; the Ku Klux Klan; the Floyd Collins tragedy—all this and much more has been crammed into this tightly edited film in a way that grips one's attention from start to finish. It is a picture well worth showing.

It was produced by Richard De Rochemont, based on an original study by Frederick L. Allen and Samuel W. Bryant.

Children should find it educating and amusing.

"Federal Agent at Large" with Dorothy Patrick, Robert Rockwell and Kent Taylor

(Republic, March 12; time, 60 min.)

A minor but fair enough program crime melodrama. Revolving around a Treasury agent who poses as a mobster and joins a gang of gold smugglers in Mexico to get a line on their operations, the story is not particularly novel, but it should pass muster with those who are not too fussy about story values. Two fist fights and a gun battle aboard a ship give the action a fair degree of excitement. Some of the situations, however, are too far-fetched to be believable. The direction and acting meet the demands of the script:—

Kent Taylor, a Treasury agent, is assigned to track down a ring that smuggled gold into the United States from Mexico for shipment to the Orient. Posing as a gangster, Taylor goes to a Mexican border town, where he wins the confidence of Dorothy Patrick, owner of a cafe, who guided the ring's operations for a secret leader. Taylor learns from her that the gold was being smuggled into the United States with the aid of an archaeological expedition from a California university, whose unearthed relics passed the border without examination under special permit. Robert Rockwell, head of the expedition, had been blackmailed by the gang into permitting them to conceal the gold in pottery. Taylor's job was to see to it that the gold was eventually put aboard a ship docked in San Pedro. Just before the gold is shipped, Taylor discovers that Dorothy and Rockwell are in love, and that they want to let the authorities know about the smuggling without exposing themselves. He reveals his identity to them and finds them agreeable to a scheme whereby they can turn state's evidence. But the plot is overheard by Roy Barcroft and Denver Pyle, members of the gang, who notify their secret leader, Thurston Hall, who masqueraded as a warm-hearted loan company owner. Hall changes plans for the shipment of the gold and murders Taylor. But Taylor, anticipating that he might lose his life, had made a wire recording outlining the gang's operations, and had arranged with Frank Puglia, a friendly gang member, to deliver it to the Customs office in Los Angeles. The information enables the authorities to trace the gold to the ship in San Pedro where, after a furious gun battle, they rescue Dorothy and Rockwell, and bring Hall and his henchmen to justice.

It was produced by Stephen Auer and directed by George Blair from an original screen play by Albert DeMond. Unobjectionable morally.

"Tyrant of the Sea" with Rhys Williams, Ron Randell and Valentine Perkins

(Columbia, April 6; time, 70 min.)

Although this costume melodrama has no names of box-office value, it has been produced a little better than the average Columbia "B" picture and should serve its purpose as the lower half of a double bill program. The action is mostly slow, and it is apparent that, because of budget limitations, the director had to resort more to dialogue than to movement. There is excitement in the battle scenes, which should thrill the easily-satisfied picture-goers. Ron Randell, as the brave young lieutenant who sides with the crew against the ruthless tyranny of his captain, makes the role believable and sympathetic. The action takes place in 1803:—

With the British Royal Navy the only obstacle to his dream of world domination, Napoleon starts building up the French Navy and also assembles invasion barges for an attack against England. The British plan a daring one-ship raid to destroy the French fleet, and Captain Rhys Williams, a cruel man, is assigned to execute the plan. Ron Randell, second in command, is engaged to Valentine Perkins, Williams' daughter. Aboard the Warrior, Williams sets sail on the dangerous mission, but day after day the attack is thwarted by clear weather. Rations become short and the crew begins to grumble, but Williams rules over

the men with sadistic fury. When disease threatens the crew, Randell and several of the crew members steal ashore to pilfer fresh provisions from the enemy. Among them is Maurice Marsac, actually a French spy, who slips away to the camp of the French general. When the men return from their sortie, Williams throws them into the brig, but he releases them when a fog settles and all is made ready for the attack. Marsac's treachery enables a French warship to locate the position of the Warrior and to open fire. The British sink the French ship, but they fail to accomplish their mission. Instead of heading for home, Williams decides on a second attack to surprise the French. The crew, however, rebels. Randell pleads with Williams to let him assume temporary command, but Williams brands him as a conspirator. All hands forget their differences when a French warship appears out of the fog. After a fierce battle, the British capture the French ship and destroy the invasion fleet. Williams congratulates Randell and the crew for their heroism, but informs them that they must stand trial under Admiralty laws. During the trial, Doris Lloyd, Williams' wife, sends a note to the defense counsel suggesting a certain line of interrogation. Williams is put on the stand and, by answering the questions, furnishes the evidence by which the Admiralty frees all the men. Valentine then rushes into Randell's arms.

It was produced by Sam Katzman and directed by Lew Landers from an original screen play by Robert Libbott and Frank Burt.

Harmless for the family trade.

"Sarumba" with Michael Whalen, Doris Dowling and Tommy Wonder

(Eagle-Lion, March; time, 64 min.)

A mediocre program musical that has little to recommend it. It is an amateurish effort, weak in story, dialogue and acting, and presented with little imagination. The picture was photographed in its entirety in Cuba, but this factor adds little to the entertainment values, for the action is confined mainly to several cheap night-club settings and street scenes. Some of the dance routines are interesting, but even these are not enough to save the picture. The photography is poor:—

Doris Dowling, a dancer, and her friend, Dolores Tatum, a singer, lose their jobs in a waterfront cafe in Havana when they fail to please a group of unappreciative, drunken sailors. As they leave the club the girls are approached by Tommy Wonder, one of the sailors, who apologizes for his buddies and offers to teach Doris some new dance steps. Their dancing in the street attracts a crowd and catches the attention of Michael Whalen, a wealthy Cuban playboy, who throws them some money as a tip. Doris talks Tommy into forming a dance team with her, unaware that he will have to jump ship to do so. They get a booking in a night-club owned by Whalen, who immediately centers his attentions on Doris. Tommy, in love with Doris himself, becomes resentful, quarrels with her, and, in an effort to show up Whalen in a gambling casino, foolishly gambles away not only his own money but also money that belonged to Doris and Dolores. Meanwhile Whalen discovers that the police were looking for Tommy for having jumped ship, and he plans to get rid of him by informing the police of his whereabouts. At a Fiesta, Tommy, who had decided to surrender to the police, gets an idea for a new dance routine and offers to stay and work it out with Doris to pay back the money he had lost. During the weeks of continuous practice, Doris and Tommy come to the realization that they are deeply in love. Dolores, sympathetic to them, turns her charms on Whalen and persuades him to use his influence to clear Tommy of the ship-jumping charge. He goes a step further by giving them a booking in his plushiest night-club, where their dance routine wins enthusiastic approval and assures their future success.

It was directed by Marion Gering, who co-produced it with George P. Quigley and Julian Roffman, from an original screen play by Jay Victor.

Harmless for the family.

RKO

"The Outlaw": Very Good-Good
 "Gunga Din" (reissue): Fair
 "The Lost Patrol" (reissue): Fair
 "Arctic Fury": Fair-Poor
 "They Live By Night": Fair
 "Strange Bargain": Fair
 "Bride for Sale": Fair
 "A Dangerous Profession": Fair
 "Holiday Affair": Good-Fair
 "The Threat": Fair
 "My Foolish Heart": Good-Fair
 "Woman on Pier 13" (formerly "I Married a Communist"): Fair
 "Man on the Eiffel Tower": Fair
 "Stromboli": Fair-Poor

Fourteen pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 9; Fair-Poor, 2.

20th Century-Fox

"Come to the Stable": Very Good
 "I Was a Male War Bride": Very Good
 "Thieves' Highway": Good-Fair
 "Father Was a Fullback": Good
 "Everybody Does It": Good-Fair
 "Oh You Beautiful Doll": Good
 "Pinky": Very Good
 "Fighting Man of the Plains": Good-Fair
 "Prince of Foxes": Good-Fair
 "Dancing in the Dark": Good-Fair
 "Whirlpool": Good-Fair
 "Stormy Weather" (reissue): Fair-Poor
 "When Willie Comes Marching Home": Good
 "Twelve O'Clock High": Very Good-Good
 "Dakota Lil": Good-Fair

Fifteen pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good, 3; Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 1.

United Artists

"Without Honor": Fair-Poor
 "The Big Wheel": Good-Fair
 "A Kiss for Corliss": Fair-Poor
 "Mrs. Mike": Good-Fair
 "Deadly is the Female": Fair
 "Johnny Holliday": Good-Fair

Six pictures have been checked with the following results: Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 2.

Universal-International

"Free for All": Fair
 "Story of Molly X": Fair
 "Bagdad": Fair
 "Undertow": Fair
 "Woman in Hiding": Good-Fair
 "The Rugged O'Riordan's": Fair-Poor
 "South Sea Sinner": Fair
 "Borderline": Fair
 "Francis": Very Good-Good

Nine pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 1.

Warner Brothers

"Story of Seabiscuit": Fair
 "Always Leave Them Laughing": Good-Fair
 "A Farewell to Arms" (reissue): Fair-Poor
 "The Hatchet Man" (reissue): Fair
 "The Lady Takes a Sailor": Fair
 "The Inspector-General": Good-Fair
 "The Hasty Heart": Fair
 "Backfire": Fair
 "Chain Lightning": Good

Nine pictures have been checked with the following results: Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 1.

"Western Pacific Agent" with Kent Taylor, Mickey Knox and Sheila Ryan

(Lippert-Screen Guild, Mar. 17; time, 65 min.)

A fair program crime melodrama, suitable for houses where such pictures are popular. The chief character is a vicious young man, who leads a life of crime rather than settle down in a small town, as his father had pleaded for him to do. From the time he commits his first crime to the end, the action becomes one of a criminal hunted by the

authorities. He is brutal and does not hesitate to shoot even his own father. A fairly thrilling situation is the one that shows him climbing up the girders of a drawbridge to escape the authorities, who eventually shoot him down. Kent Taylor is pleasant as the railroad agent. Sheila Ryan is not given much to do. The direction is fairly good, and the photography clear:—

Mickey Knox, a shiftless young man, returns to his father, Morris Carnovsky, proprietor of a grocery store in a small town, to borrow some money from him. Carnovsky pleads with Mickey to settle down, but he refuses, preferring to lead the life of a hobo. When Carnovsky refuses to give him any money, Mickey, on his way out of town, murders a railroad bridge tender, elevates the bridge, then holds up and kills Robert Lowery, the railroad paymaster, and gets away with fifty thousand dollars. Concealing the money in his rolled mattress, Mickey returns to the hobo jungles that dotted the railroad's right-of-way. The railroad assigns Taylor, its ace agent, to the case. Taylor visits Sheila Ryan, sister of the slain paymaster, and enlists her aid to track down the criminal. Meanwhile the numbers of the stolen bills are publicized, rendering them useless to Mickey. A ten-dollar bill given by Mickey to Sid Melton for his jack knife furnishes Taylor with the first clue and puts him on Mickey's trail. Mickey, rich yet broke, returns to his father's store. Unable to persuade his father to give him some "cold" money, Mickey knocks him unconscious, rifles the cash register, and gets away. Carnovsky, found unconscious and revived, pretends not to have noticed who his assailant was. On a tip from Melton, Taylor and the police locate a shack in the woods used by Mickey as a hideout. The shack is surrounded, and Carnovsky pleads with Mickey to surrender, but Mickey shoots him down in cold blood. Taylor and the police open fire and kill him.

The story is by Milton Raison, and the screen play by Fred Myton. It was produced by Sigmund Neufeld, and directed by Sam Newfield.

Being a crime picture, it is hardly suitable for children.

"Jiggs and Maggie Out West" with Joe Yule and Renie Riano

(Monogram, April 23; time, 66 min.)

A good program comedy of its kind. The story values are better than those of the other pictures of the series. The laughter is fairly abundant, with most of it stemming from its kidding of the "horse opera," from "Maggie's" animated conversations with the spirit of her grandfather, and from ghost gags and wrestling matches. Joe Yule and Renie Riano, as "Jiggs and Maggie," and Tim Ryan, as "Dinty Moore," "hoke" up the amusing characterizations in their usual robust fashion. William Beaudine's direction is fine, and the photography sharp and clear:—

Urged by the spirit of her grandfather, whose properties in a ghost mining town she had inherited, Renie, accompanied by Yule, her husband, and by June Harrison, their daughter, heads west. They are met upon their arrival by Jim Bannon and his gang, who try to scare them off under a scheme to press Bannon's claims on the mining property. But they are rescued by Riley Hill, Bannon's half-brother, who falls in love with June and protects her and her parents from Bannon's gang. Guided by her grandfather's spirit, Renie seeks out the location of a lost gold mine. Meanwhile Yule, lonesome, wires Tim Ryan that he had discovered gold. Ryan, impressed by Yule's fabulous story, rounds up his buddies and heads for the mining town, accompanied by a caravan of gold prospectors. They are met by Yule in elaborate western garb, and the rumor that gold had been discovered brings back a boom to the town. Ryan opens a deserted saloon, installs a stage show, and puts on wrestling matches, serving corned beef and cabbage as an added attraction. Renie keeps searching for the mine, but her efforts are unsuccessful because of interference by Bannon and his gang. Bannon keeps on referring to a mysterious leader, who had supposedly instructed him to kidnap Renie. Hill overhears the plot and goes to Renie's rescue, followed by Yule and his buddies. After a free-for-all, the principals are brought before the mysterious leader, who turns out to be none other than George McManus, creator of the cartoon "Bringing Up Father." He reveals that the lost gold mine is pure fiction, and points out that the real gold is in his ink bottle and his pen, with which he creates his cartoon characters.

The story, based on McManus' cartoon, was written by Barney Gerard, the producer, and Eddie Cline.

Good for the entire family.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING**Vol. XXXII****SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1950****No. 13****HOW SOME HOLLYWOOD EXECUTIVES
FEEL ABOUT TELEVISION—NO. 2**

Hollywood—Because of the confusion and uncertainty that seems to be prevalent among many exhibitors in regard to competition from television, I have decided to continue interviewing the top leaders of the picture industry to get their views, so that you, the exhibitors, may be guided accordingly.

Here is a statement by Darryl F. Zanuck, 20th Century-Fox vice-president in charge of production:

"Twentieth Century-Fox is meeting the threat of reduced theatre attendance in the following manner:

"(1) We are spending \$5,000,000 for the construction of new sound stages and modern studio facilities.

"(2) We are going to produce more "A" pictures than in any previous year. As a matter of fact we will produce as many as we can find suitable stories and casts for.

"(3) We are economizing wherever we can in the cost of individual pictures but not where the reduction could possibly affect quality and entertainment.

"(4) We are increasing the budget on certain showmanship subjects with worldwide appeal, such as *THE BLACK ROSE*, *NO WAY OUT*, *RAWHIDE*, *ALL ABOUT EVE*, *ZAPATA*, *MY BLUE HEAVEN*, *AMERICAN GUERRILLA IN THE PHILIPPINES* and *LYDIA BAILEY*. These pictures will have larger individual budgets than any comparative group on last year's production program.

"(5) We are expanding production in foreign locales in order to bring a greater variety of background to American films. *CALL IT TREASON* goes into production this summer in Germany. *THE AUSTRALIAN STORY* will be made in Australia this fall in Technicolor. *ZAPATA* will be produced entirely in Southern Mexico. *THE MUD-LARK* will be produced in England. *NO HIGHWAY* will be produced in Newfoundland and England. *LYDIA BAILEY* will be produced in Haiti. *THE DESERT FOX*, which is the story of Rommel, will be produced in North Africa. We are now shooting *AMERICAN GUERRILLA IN THE PHILIPPINES* entirely in the Philippines in Technicolor.

"You will recall that three years ago when the box office first took a dive there was great retrenchment in many sections of the industry in Hollywood. At that time Twentieth Century-Fox continued production full blast and I believe that the result of our decision to go forward at that time has been reflected in the product that has emanated from this studio during the past two years.

"We will economize but we will not retreat or surrender. The best defense in war and showmanship is an aggressive offensive.

"'Going to the theatre' will never permanently lose its fascination for the public. I have no intentions of underestimating either the momentary or perpetual appeal of Television but at the same time until Television can match the technical artistry of theatre exhibition and sound quality the theatre will have no insurmountable problem.

"Hollywood rightfully prides itself on the technical achievements of the past fifteen years in photography, sound, art direction and story telling. I have yet seen no miniature reproduction of these ingredients that could compare in any sense with theatre presentation.

"Now is the time for all exhibitors to buy new equipment and to personally hold themselves responsible for the quality of theatre projection and sound. Audiences will expect today by comparison to see and hear the best in projection and sound. In the final analysis it is my belief that Tele-

vision, no matter what form it eventually takes, will prove an asset to all branches of the Motion Picture Industry."

In connection with Mr. Zanuck's suggestion about improving your theatre, I refer you to my article, "Overcoming Competition from Television," which was published in the January 21, 1950 issue of this paper.

The following statement is by Steve Broidy, president of Monogram and Allied Artists:

"Much as I would like to I cannot agree with the adage that is being spread about that 'we have nothing to fear but fear' as far as it pertains to conditions in the industry at this time. I do not believe in burying our heads in the sand. There is a definite problem to be overcome, but it is certainly not beyond the ability of the people in this industry to accomplish this result. We must be realistic and we cannot look for a quick cure-all. There is no such easy answer. It will take work and planning.

"The elimination of double features is not the answer, anymore than the creation of triple features would be the answer. The answer lies in giving the public what they want when they want it.

"We must readjust our perspective. Here in Hollywood we have had to do it and for the past several years have been going through this readjustment process. The full impact of this readjustment has finally hit the exhibition field. Naturally, this is most serious to Hollywood, because exhibition is the cash register for the industry.

"If I were asked what basic recommendation I could make, I would suggest the following—and these are only a few highlights in a vastly complicated problem: In my experience in this industry I feel that the producer, the distributor and the exhibitor have spent so much time trying to place the blame on what is wrong on each respective group that there has been no time left for practical thinking as to the wants and needs of the consumer—the public. I might further point out that during my experience in distribution everybody has been concerned with what a particular theatre did last year as compared to this year—last year this month as compared to this year this month—last month this week, but rarely if ever have I heard anybody consider next year this month. We can apply a little more foresight.

"We must all appreciate that we have gone through a period where a man practically had to be a genius to be a failure, and it has left its mark on all of us. We have taken for granted the principle that has made this industry successful and will continue to make it successful, once we get back in harness and apply that principle—SHOW-MANSHIP! Instead of booking pictures on the basis solely of star value, shows should be booked on the basis of the entertainment value provided and the public should be made more aware of that entertainment value. The best current examples are "Francis," "Not Wanted" and "Lost Boundaries."

"This industry has gone through periods such as this before. I can recall the marked effect that Amos and Andy had in their hey-day on theatre grosses. Then as now, some people spelled finis for the motion picture industry. We went on to heights unsuspected at that period because the forces of the industry combined to create better pictures and sold them most intelligently to the public. Everybody worked so hard that there was little time once they settled down to do the job. This will apply again, once we all settle down to do our job. Radio was here to stay. Television is here to stay. Let us profit from the experience of both of these media in approaching our own problems. The more entertainment conscious the public becomes, the better our chance of selling tickets."

"The Whipped" with Dan Duryea, Herbert Marshall and Gale Storm

(United Artists, June 2; time, 89 min.)

Although it moves along at a fast clip, has good production values, keen direction and competent performances, this crime melodrama rates no better than fair, mainly because of a far-fetched complex story that is difficult to follow. Another fault lies in the fact that the audience is not in sympathy with the hero, an unprincipled newspaper reporter, who resorts to double-crossing, blackmail and other nefarious tactics to make a fast dollar, without regard to the hurt he may cause an innocent person. Even his regeneration in the end does not make one feel kindly towards him. Excessive brutality in some of the scenes, particularly at the finish where the reporter is beaten viciously by a gangster, adds to the unpleasantness:—

Dan Duryea, a big-city news reporter, is fired when he breaks a pledge to district attorney Michael O'Shea by releasing a story that prevents the indictment of Howard da Silva, head of a crime syndicate. Blacklisted from big-time newspapers, Duryea gets \$5,000 from da Silva and sets out to buy a half-interest in a suburban newspaper owned by Gale Storm. She is about to reject him when word comes that the daughter-in-law of Herbert Marshall, a newspaper tycoon who lived nearby, had been found murdered, with evidence pointing to Mary Anderson, the dead woman's maid, as the killer. Sensing a terrific story, Duryea moves swiftly and becomes a partner before Gale realizes what it is all about. Meanwhile Gary Moore, Marshall's neurotic son, privately confesses to his father that he had killed his wife, and talks him into conducting a news campaign to prove Mary guilty. Gale, a former schoolmate of Mary, believes her innocent when she denies the crime. Duryea thinks she is guilty and turns her over to the district attorney in the hope of collecting a reward offered by Marshall. But O'Shea tricks him out of the reward by having Mary state that she had surrendered voluntarily. Duryea then promotes a scheme to raise money for Mary's defense, planning to split the fee with her lawyer, but the scheme does not pan out. Meanwhile Marshall's son, worried, makes a deal with da Silva to force Duryea to stop his campaign in Mary's behalf. Da Silva's threats bring Duryea to the realization that Moore is the killer, and he demands \$25,000 from his father not to publish the story. Marshall agrees to pay, and Duryea, being decent for the first time, telephones O'Shea to come and witness the pay-off. O'Shea doubts his story and does not show up. Instead, da Silva's mobsters show up and take Duryea to a hideout, where Marshall and his son were present. Da Silva insists that either one of them shoot Duryea because he knew too much. As Marshall takes the gun, the police, notified by Gale, arrive and rescue Duryea. With Mary cleared of the murder charge, Duryea becomes a hero.

It was produced by Hal E. Chester and directed by Cyril Endfield from a screen play by Henry Blankfort, based on a story by Craig Rice. Adult fare.

"Ma and Pa Kettle Go to Town" with Marjorie Main and Percy Kilbride

(Univ. Int'l, April; time, 79 min.)

The best way to appraise this comedy is to say that its entertainment values are no better and no worse than the first "Ma and Pa Kettle" picture. Accordingly, its performance at the box-office will depend on whether or not the picture was enjoyed by your patrons. It undoubtedly will get its best reception from family audiences in small-town and neighborhood theatres. This time the story, which is pretty thin at best, has the "Kettles" taking a trip to New York and becoming involved with gangsters and the police as a result of a \$100,000 robbery. A few of the situations provoke hearty laughter; the action is, however, for the most part, so silly that sophisticated patrons will be bored instead of amused:—

Ma and Pa Kettle (Marjorie Main and Percy Kilbride) enter a jingle contest and win an all-expenses-paid trip to New York, but they are unable to go because there is no one to watch their fifteen children. When Charles McGraw, a fleeing bank robber hides out on the Kettle's farm, Pa

discovers him and accepts his explanation that he is a poet seeking isolation. Pa and Ma arrange with McGraw to watch the children while they go to New York. McGraw gives them a leather bag, which he says will be picked up by his "brother." The bag contained the \$100,000 loot, and the "brother" was really a member of McGraw's gang. Arriving in New York, Pa loses the bag when Paul McVey, a stranger, inadvertently picks it up with his own luggage. Pa, discovering the loss, buys another bag. The gangster, trailing him, steals it. Detectives on the gangster's trail follow him but release him when they find the bag empty. Pa buys another bag, only to have it stolen again, leaving him, the crooks, and the detectives confused. Richard Long, the Kettle's married son, learns about the bag mystery and goes to the police and convinces them that Pa can lead them to the gang when he identifies a photo of McGraw. The authorities pick up McGraw, who is more than happy to be "rescued" from the tortures devised by the young Kettles. Meanwhile McVey discovers the bag and its contents and, thinking that Pa is a big business tycoon, invites him and Ma to a fashionable party. The Kettles are trailed to the party by the crooks, who are in turn followed by the police. One of the crooks manages to grab the bag, but Pa, calling the steps of a square dance, traps him by having the dancing couples form a ring around him. Their trip over, Ma and Pa return home, arriving in time to save two policemen who, sent to protect the children, had been tied and gagged by them.

It was produced by Leonard Goldstein and directed by Charles Lamont from a story and screen play by Martin Ragaway and Leonard Stern. Suitable for the family.

"Cheaper by the Dozen" with Clifton Webb, Jeanne Crain and Myrna Loy

(20th Century-Fox, April; time, 85 min.)

Photographed in Technicolor, this is a delightfully amusing, heart-warming comedy drama of family life, adapted from the best-selling novel of the same title, written by Frank B. Gilbreth, Jr. and Ernestine Gilbreth Carey, and dealing with episodes in the life of the Gilbreth family. It is a fine entertainment, not only for family audiences, but for all types of movie-goers. As the strict but very human father of twelve children ranging up to the age of seventeen, Clifton Webb is excellent. He injects into the characterization a touch of "Mr. Belvedere," but this seems quite fitting since he portrays a self-assured type of person, a man who runs his household with a firm hand, yet at all times shows a tender affection for his wife and a warm regard for each of his children. Myrna Loy, as his placid wife, is charming.

The story, which takes place in the early 1920's, is made up of a series of incidents in the life of the family. It depicts Webb as an industrial engineer and exponent of "motion study," which he introduces into his own home so that all concerned will make every movement count. The comedy, which keeps one chuckling throughout and at times reaches hilarious proportions, is brought about by such incidents as the whole family piling into a large Pierce Arrow when they move from Rhode Island to New Jersey; the family councils called by Webb from time to time to discuss and settle problems; his herding all the children to classes when school opens in the fall; the mass tonsillectomy of the children when several of them come down with the whooping cough, with Webb himself submitting to the operation, so as to make a study of a doctor's waste motions; the manner in which the children, backed by their mother, trick Webb into agreeing to purchase a pet dog; the manner in which Jeanne Crain, his eldest daughter, breaks down his opposition to bobbed hair, rolled stockings, lipstick, and the like; his insistence that he go along as chaperone when a local boy takes Jeanne to a high school dance; and his joining in the fun at the dance, proving himself as capable a dancer as any of the youngsters.

The one jarring though somewhat dramatic note occurs towards the finish, where Webb dies of a sudden heart attack and the family determines to carry on the traditions he had set for them. Although this ending is in keeping with the book, it tends to take away from the spectator the happy feeling given to him by the picture up to that point. 20th Century-Fox would do well to make close study of audience reaction to this depressing ending lest it hurt the word-of-mouth advertising the picture richly deserves.

It was produced by Lamar Trotti from his own screen play, and directed by Walter Lang.

Excellent for the entire family.

"House by the River" with Louis Hayward, Jane Wyman and Lee Bowman

(Republic, March 25; time, 88 min.)

This murder mystery melodrama, revolving around a conceited author who commits a murder and then capitalizes on the publicity for the sale of one of his books, is interesting as a character study, but as entertainment it is gruesome and unpleasant. The gruesomeness is brought about by the manner in which the killer and his brother place the murdered girl's body in a sack, weight it, and throw it in the river, and by the frantic efforts of the killer to recover the body when it floats to the surface and is caught in a floodtide. The unpleasantness is caused by the fact that the story pits brother against brother, with one attempting the brutal murder of the other. The action is somewhat slow, but it manages to generate considerable suspense. Since the audience is aware of the murderer's identity from the beginning, one's interest lies in how he will be made to pay for his crime. The acting is competent and the production values very good:—

While his wife, Jane Wyatt, is away from home, Louis Hayward, an unsuccessful author, tries to make love to Dorothy Patrick, a servant girl, and strangles her to death when she becomes hysterical and repulses him. He is found cowering over the body by Lee Bowman, his crippled brother, a bookkeeper, who for years had been getting him out of one scrape after another. Playing on Bowman's affection for Jane, Hayward persuades him to help dispose of Dorothy's body in the river, and to keep the crime from the police. The body is found by the authorities after it floats to the surface and, at the inquest, both Hayward and Bowman are cleared, but certain testimony places seeds of suspicion against Bowman in the minds of the townspeople. The experience gives Hayward a strange new confidence. He capitalizes on the publicity to increase the sale on one of his books and, in his perverted conceit, starts writing another book about Dorothy's murder, camouflaging only the names. Bowman, bitter at the loss of business and of friends, is unable to bear the burden of guilt any longer and tells Hayward that he plans to go to the police. Hayward reacts by striking his brother across the head with a heavy chain and tossing him in the river for dead. Returning home, Hayward finds his wife reading the manuscript of his murder story, and from her horrified expression realizes that she suspected the truth. He moves to kill her but freezes with fright when Bowman, dripping wet, appears in the doorway. Mad with fear, Hayward rushes out of the room and kills himself accidentally in a fall from the stairs.

It was produced by Howard Welsch and directed by Fritz Lang from a screen play by Mel Dinelli, based on a novel by A. P. Herbert. Adult fare.

"Wabash Avenue" with Betty Grable, Victor Mature and Phil Harris

(20th Century-Fox, April; time, 92 min.)

A gay, rowdy Technicolor musical, lavishly produced. Except for the music, the change of locale to Chicago in 1893, and some minor changes in the plot, the picture is a remake of "Coney Island," which was produced by 20th Century-Fox in 1943 and also starred Betty Grable. It is a highly entertaining picture all the way through, with peppy action, plentiful comedy, and melodious songs built around elaborate production numbers, but several of the songs and dances are not in good taste. As a matter of fact, Miss Grable's body contortions in several of the early dance numbers are suggestive and border on the vulgarity. Most of the comedy is brought about by the manner in which Victor Mature and Phil Harris cheat and doublecross each other. James Barton, as an amiable drunkard, is very good; he walks away with every scene in which he appears:—

Learning that Phil Harris, his former partner in a carnival show, owned a profitable saloon in Chicago, Victor Mature goes there and demands that he be made a partner because Harris had swindled him out of the carnival partnership in a crooked poker game. Harris tells him to get out. Before leaving, Mature angers Betty Grable, star of the saloon's floor show, by chiding her about her "honky tonk"

clothes. Mature next tries to swindle Harris in a card game only to be outswindled by him. He takes his revenge by inciting a group of temperance crusaders to wreck the saloon. During the wild melee, James Barton, a drunkard, is knocked unconscious when Harris pushes him and his head strikes a brass rail. Mature carries Barton out of the saloon, revives him, and spirits him out of town. Then, with the aid of a wax dummy that looked like Barton, he stages a fake funeral and leads Harris to believe that he had killed Barton. In return for Mature's promise to say nothing to the police, Harris makes him a partner in his new casino at the Chicago World's Fair, and permits him to stage the show. At rehearsals, he takes Betty in hand over her violent protests and compels her to change her style of singing and dancing. Mature's guidance makes her the hit of the Fair and, in spite of herself, she falls in love with him, much to the chagrin of Harris, who wanted to marry her himself. On the day that Betty and Mature are to be married, Harris, through trickery, leads her to believe that Mature was trying to prevent Oscar Hammerstein from signing her for a Broadway show, and that he was marrying her to further his own ambitions. Betty, furious, calls off the marriage. Meanwhile Barton makes an appearance, and Harris, aware that he had been duped, throws out Mature as his partner. Mature goes to New York where he opens up a cheap music hall on the Bowery in partnership with Reginald Gardner. Months later, he visits Betty on the opening night of her show on Broadway. Harris, present in the dressing room, realizes that Betty still loved Mature. He brings them together again by confessing his trickery.

It was produced by William Perlberg and directed by Henry Koster from a screen play by Harry Tugend and Charles Lederer. Best suited for mature audiences.

"The Daughter of Rosie O'Grady" with June Haver and Gordon MacRae

(Warner Bros., April 29; time, 104 min.)

A pleasing Technicolor musical. Like most backstage musicals of its type, it has a thin, commonplace story; nevertheless, its mixture of comedy, romance, sentiment, songs and dances, enhanced by the costumes worn at the turn of the century, is consistently entertaining. The film's most distinctive moments are in the musical interludes, with the spirited singing and dancing of June Haver, who does her best work in this picture, pleasant to hear and watch. The expert dancing of Gene Nelson, and the fine baritone voice of Gordon MacRae, add much to the entertainment values. An outstanding performance is turned in by James Barton, as June's stubborn Irish father, who objects to her going on the stage. The sequence where Barton gets drunk brooding over the death of his wife and over June's defiance of his wishes, is highly dramatic. S. Z. Sakall, as a family friend, provokes many a laugh with his comical ways:—

June and her sisters, Marsha Jones and Debbie Reynolds, live with her father, James Barton, a horsecar driver and former vaudevillian, who hated everything connected with the stage ever since the death of his wife, who had been his dancing partner. June, who yearned for a song-and-dance career, meets and falls in love with Gordon MacRae (as Tony Pastor), owner of a theatre, but makes him represent himself as a college student lest her father forbid that she see him. Barton eventually learns the truth about MacRae and orders him never to see his daughter again. This leads to a quarrel between June and her father, and she leaves home for a stage career with MacRae. Unknown to Barton, Debbie was secretly married to a policeman and was about to have a baby. When he learns that a daughter of his was to give birth, he assumes it to be June and tries to bring about MacRae's arrest. He then learns the truth, but he becomes so bitter that he disowns all three daughters. Marsha goes to live with Debbie, while June goes on to make a name for herself as the star of MacRae's revue. MacRae, deeply in love with June, does not want to marry her without her father's consent. She misunderstands the methods he employs to make her reconcile with her father, and breaks with him just before the opening of his new show. On Christmas Eve, the three daughters, acting independently, go to visit their father, a lonely but still bitter man. The joy of having them with him breaks down his resistance and he takes them all to his heart. He insists that June return to MacRae for the opening of the show, and proudly goes to the theatre to watch her reach new heights.

It was produced by William Jacobs and directed by David Butler from a story by Jack Rose and Melville Shavelson, who collaborated on the screen play with Peter Milne. Suitable for the family.

"Killer Shark" with Roddy McDowall and Roland Winters

(Monogram, March 19; time, 76 min.)

A pretty good double-bill melodrama. The story is pleasing, but the action for the most part is mild. There are, however, several situations that are tense. The scenes, for example, where Roddy McDowall falls into the shark-infested waters and his father and a member of the crew are attacked by a shark as they try to save him, each losing a leg, are pretty thrilling. Exciting also are the scenes of the fight between friends of Roddy's father and a gang of cut-throats who had robbed Roddy of his share from the sale of shark liver. The scenes of the tuna fishing are interesting. The direction and acting are adequate, and the photography good:—

Roddy, a college student in Boston, goes to a fishing village in Mexico during his vacation to visit Roland Winters, his father, who owned and operated a shark boat. Winters, divorced from his wife, had not seen Roddy in twelve years and welcomes him warmly. He advises Roddy to dress like a fisherman and not like a college kid, so as to avoid the sneers of the crew. While shark hunting with his father, Roddy falls into the water and, in the ensuing rescue, his father and Edward Norris, a crew member, each lose a leg, but medical attention saves their lives. Back in port, Roddy, realizing that his father will lose his boat unless certain notes were paid, decides to go shark hunting. Assisted by Laurette Luez, a Mexican girl, Roddy provisions his father's boat and recruits a new crew because the old one had sailed on another boat. The catch is great, but the crew, a bunch of cutthroats, dope Roddy and, while he is asleep, sell the catch to another boat. When Roddy awakens, he is told that the catch had spoiled and that it had to be thrown overboard. Upon his return empty-handed, Roddy recounts this story to Nacho Galindo, one of his father's close friends. Galindo suspects trickery when he learns that Douglas Fowley, Julio Sebastian and Ralf Harolde were members of Roddy's crew. He summons other friends of Winters, and together they round up the crooks in a saloon, give them a good beating, and recover Roddy's share from the sale of the catch. Roddy returns to college, bid farewell by his proud father and all his loyal friends.

The picture was produced by Lindsley Parsons, and directed by Oscar Boetticher, from a screen play by Charles Lang.

Good for the family.

"Boy from Indiana" with Lon McCallister and Lois Butler

(Eagle-Lion, March; time, 66 min.)

A mildly entertaining horse-racing melodrama. The meandering story and the treatment offer little that is novel, but where pictures of this type are liked, and where audiences are not too critical, it should serve its purpose as the lower half of a double bill. Except for one sequence, where Texas Dandy, the racehorse, is attacked and gored by a ferocious bull, the action offers a minimum of excitement. As for the acting, the players do their best with the ordinary material given them, but their efforts are not enough to overcome the plot's deficiencies:—

George Cleveland, elderly owner of a seemingly rundown quarter horse, enters him in match races at different county fairs and, by doping the animal, wins consistently. Lon McCallister, a wandering boy with ambitions to become a sports writer, is hired by Cleveland as his jockey, but kept in the dark about the doping. At the end of the racing season, Lon accepts a job on Cleveland's rundown ranch for the winter. There he learns that Billie Burke, a wealthy horse-breeder who owned the adjoining ranch, wanted to add Cleveland's ranch to her property, but Cleveland refuses to sell. Lon meets and falls in love with Lois Butler, who had been engaged by Miss Burke to do an oil painting of Flyaway, her prize horse. Lois discovers that Cleveland's horse is, not an old no-account animal, but Texas Dandy, one of the outstanding quarter-horses of Texas. They clip,

comb and curry the horse, bringing out his beauty and fine lines. Cleveland is angered by their action because it will interfere with his racetrack operations. But he takes heart when Lois and Lon prove to him that the horse had great speed; he arranges with Miss Burke for a match race between Flyaway and Texas Dandy, the stakes to be Flyaway against his ranch. Several weeks before the race, Texas Dandy is gored by a bull. He recovers in time for the race, but Cleveland, fearing that he is still weak, slips a couple of pills into the horse just before the start of the race. Texas Dandy wins, but track officials, who had long had an eye on Cleveland, withhold their decision until a saliva test is made. It turns out that the pills Cleveland thought were stimulants were actually aspirin, thus the victory is made official. Several months later, Cleveland departs with Flyaway for a tour of the racetracks, leaving his ranch to Lois and Lon, now happily married.

It was produced by Frank Melford and directed by John Rawlins, from a screen play by Otto Englander.

Suitable for the family.

"Four Days Leave" with Cornel Wilde, Josette Day and Simone Signoret

(Film Classics, March; time, 98 min.)

Revolving around the romantic adventures of an American sailor on a four-day pass in Switzerland, this picture, though it has a pleasant story, is slow and somewhat tiresome. Its 98-minute running time is much too long. If it were to be cut down to about seventy minutes, the action would be speeded up considerably. The picture was photographed in its entirety in Switzerland, in winter, and most of the background scenes are interesting and beautiful. Worthy of particular mention are the excellent shots of skiing. Cornel Wilde is exceptionally good in the leading role. There is considerable comedy, but it is of the mild kind:—

Joining a group of American soldiers on leave in Switzerland, Wilde, a lone sailor, meets and falls in love with Josette Day, a Swiss-French girl, when he buys a watch in her uncle's shop. He breaks the watch later in the day, but since the repair work could not be done before his departure for Zermat, with his pals, to ski, Josette promises to deliver it to him. When her train is delayed because of a snow avalanche, Wilde becomes depressed. He is taken in hand by Simone Signoret, a vivacious flirt, who bolsters his spirits by making him join her in a public singing and dancing exhibition in the hotel ballroom. Josette, who had arrived in the meantime, witnesses his fun and refuses to have anything to do with him. On the following day he pursues her on skis, explains that Simone meant nothing to him, and wins her forgiveness. He asks her to marry him at once, but she rejects the proposal on the ground that neither knew the other well enough. Wilde then conceives the idea of a "trial marriage," with honorable intentions. During the day they experiment with problems ordinarily faced by married couples and solve them. Her resistance to a hasty marriage weakens, but she still feels that there is need for a critical test. Such a test is provided when Simone, resenting the fact that Wilde has escaped her, decides to break up the romance. Having learned that Wilde's GI pals have a "tip sheet" in which was typed personal information about certain women at the resort, particularly about herself, Simone steals the paper, types in some references to Josette, and then hands it to her in a way that makes Josette believe that she had been a victim of a shabby trick by Wilde. Josette leaves the mountain resort in a huff, refusing to listen to Wilde's explanations. But Wilde, determined not to let her run away, convinces her that his intentions were honorable and that they were meant for each other.

It was produced by L. Wechsler and directed by Leopold Lindtberg, from a screen play by Richard Schweizer, the director and Curt Siodmak, based on an original story by Mr. Schweizer.

Unobjectionable for family audiences.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1950

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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Allied Artists Features

(1560 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

(Distribution through Monogram)

14 Stampede—Cameron-Storm	Aug. 28
16 There's a Girl in My Heart—Knox-Bowman-Jean.....	Jan.

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

252 Feudin' Rhythm—Eddy Arnold	Dec.
225 Tell It to the Judge—Russell-Cummings	Dec.
229 And Baby Makes Three—Young-Hale	Dec.
209 Prison Warden—Baxter-Lee	Dec. 8
263 Frontier Outpost—Starrett (55 m.).....	Dec. 29
227 All the King's Men—Crawford-Dru	Jan.
226 The Traveling Saleswoman—Davis-Devine	Jan.
185 Sons of New Mexico—Autry (71 m.).....	Jan.
214 Mary Ryan, Detective—Hunt-Litel	Jan. 5
218 Chinatown at Midnight—Hurd Hatfield.....	Jan. 19
221 Jolson Sings Again—Parks-Hale	Feb.
232 Father Is a Bachelor—Holden-Gray	Feb.
228 The Nevadan—Scott-Malone	Feb.
231 Mark of the Gorilla—Weissmuller.....	Feb.
267 Trail of the Rustlers—Starrett (55 m.).....	Feb. 2
213 Girls' School—Reynolds-Ford	Feb. 9

Eagle-Lion Features

(165 West 46th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

956 Cowboy & the Prizefighter—Bannon (59 m.)....	Dec.
009 Port of New York—Brady-Carter	Dec.
010 Passport to Pimlico—British cast	Dec.
I'll Be Seeing You—reissue	Dec.
013 The Gay Lady—British cast	Dec.
014 Sarumba—Dowling-Whalen	Jan.
017 Salt to the Devil—Wanamaker-Padovani (formerly "Give Us This Day")	Jan.
020 Never Fear—Forrest-Brasselle	Jan.
The Third Man—Cotten-Valli-Welles	Jan.
943 Hit the Ice—reissue	Feb.
018 The Sundowners—Preston-Wills-Barrymore	Feb.
021 The Amazing Mr. Beecham—British cast.....	Feb.
022 Guilty of Treason—Bickford-Granville	Feb.
019 The Great Rupert—Durante-Moore	Mar.
023 The Golden Gloves Story—James Dunn.....	Mar.
Boy from Indiana—McCallister-Butler	Mar.
The Fighting Stallion—Edwards-Merrick	Mar.
Forbidden Jungle—Harvey-Taylor	Mar.
Kind Hearts & Coronets—British cast	Apr.
Kill or be Killed—Tierney-Coulouris	Apr.
015 The Perfect Woman—British cast	Apr.

Film Classics Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

The Pirates of Capri—Hayward-Barnes	Dec. 1
Guilty Bystander—Scott-Emerson	Jan.
The Flying Saucer—Conrad-Garrison	Jan.
Cry Murder—Mathews-Lord	Feb.
Four Days Leave—Cornel Wilde	Mar.
The Vicious Years—Cook-Moore	Mar.
The Wind is My Lover—Linfors-Kent	Apr.
Rapture—Langin-Albiin	Apr.
Congolaise—Documentary	Apr.
Good Time Girl—British cast	Apr.

Lippert-Screen Guild Features

(255 Hyde St., San Francisco 2, Calif.)

4903 Square Dance Jubilee—Barry-Hughes	Nov. 11
4914 Red Desert—Barry-Neal	Dec. 3
4915 Tough Assignment—Barry-Steele-Brodie	Dec. 17
4916 Hollywood Varieties—Hoosier Hot Shots	Jan. 14
4917 Radar Secret Service—Howard-Neal	Jan. 28
4902 Baron of Arizona—Price-Drew	Mar. 4
4919 Western Pacific Agent—Taylor-Ryan	Mar. 17
4927 Hostile Country—Ellison-Hayden	Mar. 24
4922 Everybody's Dancin'—Lane-Jackson	Mar. 31
4928 Marshal of Eldorado—Ellison-Hayden	Apr. 7
4925 Colorado Ranger—Ellison-Hayden	Apr. 21
4910 Operation Haylift—Williams-Rutherford	Apr. 28
4926 Crooked River—Ellison-Hayden	May 5
4929 Fast on the Draw—Ellison-Hayden	May 19
4930 West of the Brazos—Ellison-Hayden	June 2

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

6 That Forsyte Woman—Garson-Flynn-Pidgeon.....	Nov.
7 Adam's Rib—Tracy-Hepburn	Nov.
8 Tension—Totter-Baschert	Nov.
10 Challenge to Lassie—Gwenn-Crisp	Dec.
11 On the Town—Kelly-Ellen-Sinatra	Dec.

(Continued on next page)

- 15 Johnny Eager—reissueDec.
 12 Malaya—Tracy-StewartJan.
 13 Ambush—Taylor-Hodiak-DahlJan.
 16 Battleground—Johnson-Hodiak-MurphyJan.
 9 Intruder in the Dust—Brian Jarman, Jr.Feb.
 14 East Side-West Side—Stanwyck-MasonFeb.
 17 Blossoms in the Dust—reissueFeb.
 18 Key to the City—Gable-YoungFeb.
 19 Nancy Goes to Rio—Sothorn-PowellMar.
 20 Black Hand—Gene KellyMar.
 21 Conspirator—Robt. Taylor-Eliz. TaylorMar.
 22 The Yellow Cab Man—Skelton-DeHavenApr.
 23 Side Street—Granger-O'DonnellApr.
 24 The Outriders—McCrea-Dahl-SullivanApr.
 25 The Reformer & the Redhead—Powell-Allyson...May
 26 Please Believe Me—Kerr-Walker-LawfordMay
 27 Shadow on the Wall—Sothorn-ScottMay
 28 The Big Hangover—Johnson-TaylorMay
 The Happy Years—Stockwell-HickmanJune
 Father of the Bride—Tracy-Bennett-TaylorJune
 Skipper Surprised His Wife—Walker-LeslieJune

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- 4807 Bomba on Panther Island—Johnny Sheffield. Dec. 18
 4845 Range Land—Whip Wilson (56 m.)Dec. 25
 (End of 1948-49 Season)

Beginning of 1949-50 Season

- 4901 Blue Grass of Kentucky—Williams-Nigh....Jan. 22
 4946 Fence Riders—Whip Wilson (57 m.)Jan. 29
 4911 Joe Palooka Meets Humphrey—Kirkwood...Feb. 5
 4913 Blonde Dynamite—Bowery BoysFeb. 12
 4925 West of Wyoming—J. M. Brown (57 m.)...Feb. 19
 4902 Young Daniel Boone—Bruce-MillerMar. 5
 4952 Over the Border—J. M. Brown (58 m.)...Mar. 12
 4907 Killer Shark—Roddy McDowallMar. 19
 4922 Square Dance Katy—Jimmy DavisMar. 25
 4941 Gun Slingers—Whip WilsonApr. 9
 4926 Mystery at the Burlesque—English cast...Apr. 16
 4909 Jiggs & Maggie Out West—Yule-RianoApr. 23
 4951 Six Gun Mesa—J. M. BrownApr. 30
 4917 Father Makes Good—WalburnMay 7
 4914 Lucky Losers—Bowery BoysMay 14
 4923 The Noose—British-madeMay 28
 4912 Humphrey Takes a Chance—KirkwoodJune 4

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

- 4905 Chicago Deadline—Ladd-Reed-HavocNov. 11
 4906 Red, Hot and Blue—Hutton-MatureNov. 25
 4907 Holiday Inn—reissueDec. 2
 4908 The Lady Eve—reissueDec. 2
 4909 The Great Lover—Bob HopeDec. 28
 4910 File on Thelma Jordan—Stanwyck-CoreyJan.
 4911 Captain China—Russell-Payne-RussellFeb.
 4912 Dear Wife—Caulfield-HoldenFeb.
 4913 So Proudly We Hail—reissueMar.
 4914 Wake Island—reissueMar.
 4915 Paid in Full—Scott-Cummings-LynnMar.
 4921 Lives of a Bengal Lancer—reissueMar.
 4920 Beau Geste—reissueMar.
 4917 Riding High—Crosby-Gray-GleasonApr.
 4918 Captain Carey, U.S.A.—Ladd-HendricksApr.
 4919 No Man of Her Own—Stanwyck-LundMay
 4916 Eagle & the Hawk—Payne-Fleming-O'Keefe...June

Prestige Pictures Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(Distribution through Universal-International)

(No national release dates)

- Girl in the Painting—Mai Zetterling.....
 Daybreak—Todd-Portman

RKO Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

- 011 Arctic Fury—Documentary
 009 They Live By Night—O'Donnell-Granger
 010 Strange Bargain—Scott-Lynn
 012 Masked Raiders—Tim Holt (60 m.)
 068 Bride for Sale—Colbert-Brent-Young
 014 A Dangerous Profession—Raft-Raines-O'Brien...
 013 Holiday Affair—Mitchum-Leigh
 015 The Threat—O'Shea-McGraw-Gray
 016 Riders of the Range—Tim Holt (61 m.)
 052 My Foolish Heart—Hayward-Andrews
 094 Cinderella—Disney
 017 Woman on Pier 13—Day-Ryan
 (formerly "I Married a Communist").....

- 969 Man on the Eiffel Tower—Tone-Laughton
 070 Stromboli—Ingrid Bergman
 919 Storm Over Wyoming—Tim Holt (60 m.)
 018 The Tattooed Stranger—Miles-White
 Tarzan and the Slave Girl—Barker-Darcel
 The Capture—Wright-Ayres
 Wagonmaster—Johnson-Drew

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

- 4904 The Blonde Bandit—Rockwell-PatrickDec. 22
 4971 Pioneer Marshal—Monte Hale (60 m.)Dec. 24
 4941 Bells of Coronado—Roy Rogers (67 m.)...Jan. 8
 4907 Unmasked—Rockwell-FullerJan. 30
 4962 Gun Man of Abilene—Allan Lane (60 m.)...Feb. 6
 4910 Tarnished—Patrick-FranzFeb. 28
 4909 Singing Guns—Monroe-Raines-BrennanFeb. 28
 4905 Sands of Iwo Jima—Payne-AgarMar. 1
 4906 Belle of Old Mexico—Patrick-RockwellMar. 1
 4911 Federal Agent at Large—Patrick-Rockwell...Mar. 12
 4972 The Vanishing Westerner—Hale (60 m.)...Mar. 21
 4942 Twilight in the Sierras—Rogers (67 m.)...Mar. 22
 4912 House By the River—Hayward-WyattMar. 25
 Woman from Headquarters—
 4963 Code of the Silver Sage—Lane (60 m.)Mar. 25
 4913 Harbor of Missing Men—Denning-Towne...Mar. 26
 Huston-RockwellApr. 22
 Hills of Oklahoma—Rex AllenApr. 25

Selznick Rel. Org. Features

(400 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.)

- The Fallen Idol—British castNov.
 The Third Man—Welles-Valli-CottenFeb.

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

- 926 Everybody Does It—Douglas-DarnellNov.
 927 Oh, You Beautiful Doll—Haver-StevensNov.
 931 Pinky—Crain-LundiganNov.
 930 Fighting Man of the Plains—ScottDec.
 929 Prince of Foxes—Power-Welles-HendrixDec.
 (End of 1949 Season)

Beginning of 1950 Season

- 001 Dancing in the Dark—Powell-DrakeJan.
 002 Whirlpool—Tierney-Conte-FerrerJan.
 049 Stormy Weather—reissueJan.
 003 When Willie Comes Marching Home—Dailey..Feb.
 004 Twelve O'Clock High—Gregory PeckFeb.
 005 Dakota Lil—Montgomery WindsorFeb.
 006 Mother Didn't Tell Me—McGuire-Lundigan...Mar.
 008 Under My Skin—Garfield-PrelleMar.
 009 Cheaper By the Dozen—Webb-Crain-LoyApr.
 010 Wabash Avenue—Grable-MatureApr.
 007 Three Came Home—Colbert-KnowlesApr.
 012 The Big Lift—Clift-DouglasMay
 011 A Ticket to Tomahawk—Baxter-DaileyMay
 013 Night and the City—Tierney-WidmarkJune
 014 Broken Arrow—Stewart-PagetJune

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- The Big Wheel—Rooney-Romay-MitchellNov. 5
 A Kiss for Corliss—Temple-NivenNov. 25
 Mrs. Mike—Powell-KeyesDec. 17
 Davy Crockett, Indian Scout—Montgomery-Drew..Jan. 7
 Gun Crazy—Dall-Cummins (formerly
 "Deadly is the Female")Jan. 20
 Johnny Holliday—William BendixFeb. 17
 The Girl from San Lorenzo—Renaldo-Carrillo...Feb. 24
 Love Happy—Marx Bros.-MasseyMar. 3
 The Great Plane Robbery—Tom ConwayMar. 10
 Quicksand—Rooney-BatesMar. 24
 Champagne for Caesar—Colman-HolmApr. 7
 D.O.A.—Edmund O'BrienApr. 21
 Johnny One-Eye—O'Brien-Morris-MoranMay 5
 So Young, So Bad—Henreid-McLeodMay 19
 The Whipped—Duryea-Storm-O'SheaJune 2
 Iriquois Trail—Montgomery-MarshallJune 16

Universal-International Features

(445 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

- 901 Free for All—Cummings-BlythNov.
 902 Story of Molly X—Havoc-Hart-RussellNov.
 903 Bagdad—O'Hara-PriceNov.
 904 Undertow—Brady-Russell-HartDec.
 906 Woman in Hiding—Lupino-DuffJan.

907 The Rugged O'Riordans—British castJan.
 908 South Sea Sinner—Carey-WintersJan.
 909 Borderline—MacMurray-TrevorFeb.
 910 Francis—Donald O'ConnorFeb.
 912 Buccaneer's Girl—DeCarlo-FriendMar.
 911 The Kid from Texas—Murphy-StormMar.
 913 Outside the Wall—Maxwell-BasehartMar.
 914 Ma & Pa Kettle Go to Town—Main-Kilbride....Apr.
 915 One Way Street—Mason-Duryea-TorenApr.
 916 Comanche Territory—O'Hara-CareyMay
 917 I Was a Shoplifter—Brady-Freeman-KingMay
 Sierra—Murphy-HendrixJune
 Spy Ring—Toren-DuffJune
 Adam and Evelyn—British castnot set
 905 Tight Little Island—British castnot set

Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

907 Story of Sea Biscuit—Temple-FitzgeraldNov. 12
 908 Always Leave Them Laughing—Berle-Mayo....Nov. 26
 909 A Farewell to Arms—reissueDec. 10
 910 The Hatchet Man—reissueDec. 10
 911 The Lady Takes a Sailor—Wyman-Morgan....Dec. 24
 912 The Inspector-General—Danny KayeDec. 31
 913 The Hasty Heart—Reagan-Neal-ToddJan. 14
 915 Backfire—Mayo-MacRae-O'BrienFeb. 11
 905 Chain Lightning—Bogart-ParkerFeb. 25
 916 Young Man With a Horn—
 Douglas-Bacall-DayMar. 1
 917 Perfect Strangers—Rogers-MorganMar. 25
 918 Barricade—Clark-Massey-RomanApr. 1
 919 Stage Fright—Wyman-Dietrich-WildingApr. 15
 920 The Daughter of Rosie O'Grady—
 Haver-MacRaeApr. 29

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

2804 Racing Headliners—Sports (8½ m.)Jan. 5
 2951 Ina Ray Hutton & Orch.—
 Thrills of Music (9 m.)Jan. 5
 2502 Punchy De Leon—Jolly Frolics (6½ m.)...Jan. 12
 2750 The Sound Man—Industry short (10 m.)...Jan. 19
 2606 Ye Olde Swap Shoppe—
 Favorite (reissue) (8 m.)Jan. 19
 2652 Blue Angel—Cavalcade of B'way (10½ m.)...Jan. 26
 2855 The Great Showman—
 Screen Snapshots (10 m.)Jan. 26
 2607 Kangaroo Kid—Favorite (reissue) (7½ m.)...Feb. 2
 2553 Candid Microphone No. 3 (10½ m.)...Feb. 23
 2805 King Archer—Sports (9 m.)Feb. 23
 2856 It Was Only Yesterday—
 Screen Snapshots (10 m.)Mar. 9
 2503 Spellbound Hound—Jolly Frolics (7 m.)...Mar. 16
 2608 Tom Thumb's Brother—
 Favorite (reissue) (7 m.)Mar. 23
 2806 The Rasslin' Match of the Century—
 Sports (9 m.)Mar. 30
 2857 Meet the Winners—Screen SnapshotsApr. 6
 2554 Candid Microphone No. 4Apr. 20
 2807 College Sports Paradise—SportsApr. 20
 2653 Village Barn—Cavalcade of B'wayApr. 27

Columbia—Two Reels

2433 Love in Gloom—
 Youngman (reissue) (19 m.)Dec. 15
 2120 Sir Galahad—Serial (15 episodes)Dec. 22
 2404 Punchy Cowpunchers—Stooges (17 m.)Jan. 5
 2413 His Baiting Beauty—
 Harry Von Zell (18 m.)Jan. 12
 2405 Hugs and Mugs—Stooges (16 m.)Feb. 2
 2434 Calling All Curtains—Collins & Kennedy
 (reissue) (16 m.)Feb. 9
 2424 Hold That Monkey—Schilling & LaneFeb. 16
 2406 Dopey Dicks—Stooges (15½ m.)Mar. 2
 2414 Dizzy Yardbird—Joe Besser (16½ m.)...Mar. 9
 2415 Marinated Mariner—Andy Clyde (16 m.)...Mar. 30
 2140 Cody of the Pony Express—Serial (15 ep.)...Apr. 6

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

S-153 We Can Dream, Can't We?—
 Pete Smith (9 m.)Dec. 3
 W-136 Tennis Chumps—Cartoon (7 m.)Dec. 10
 T-114 A Wee Bit of Scotland—
 Traveltalk (10 m.)Dec. 17
 W-137 Counterfeit Cat—Cartoon (7 m.)Dec. 24

S-154 Sports Oddities—Pete Smith (8 m.)Dec. 31
 W-138 Little Quacker—Cartoon (7 m.)Jan. 7
 W-139 Saturday Evening Puss—Cartoon (7 m.)...Jan. 14
 S-155 Pest Control—Pete Smith (8 m.)Jan. 14
 T-115 Land of Tradition—Traveltalk (9 m.)...Jan. 21
 S-156 Crashing the Movies—Pete Smith (8 m.)...Jan. 28
 W-140 Why Play Leap Frog?—Cartoon (7 m.)...Feb. 4
 W-141 Texas Tom—Cartoon (7 m.)Mar. 1
 T-116 Colorful Holland—Traveltalk (9 m.)...Mar. 4
 Z-171 Screen Actors—Industry ShortMay 13

Paramount—One Reel

P9-3 Land of the Lost Jewels—Noveltoon (10 m.)...Jan. 6
 X9-4 Blue Hawaii—Screen Song (7 m.)Jan. 13
 R9-3 Farther Down East—Sportlight (10 m.)Jan. 20
 E9-3 How Green Is My Spinach—Popeye (7 m.)...Jan. 27
 Z9-3 Breezy Little Bears—Champion (11 m.) ...Feb. 3
 K9-3 The Rhumba Seat—PacemakerFeb. 10
 X9-5 Detouring Thru Maine—Screen SongFeb. 17
 R9-5 Wild Goose Chase—SportlightFeb. 24
 P9-4 Quack-a-doodle-do—Noveltoon (7 m.)Mar. 3
 Z9-4 Cilly Goose—Champion (10 m.)Mar. 10
 E9-4 Gym Jam—Popeye (7 m.)Mar. 17
 X9-5 Shortenin' Bread—Screen Song (7 m.)Mar. 24
 P9-5 Teacher's Pest—Noveltoon (7 m.)Mar. 31
 Z9-5 Three Bears in a Boat—Champion (10 m.)...Apr. 7
 R9-6 Start 'em Young—Sportlight (10 m.)...Apr. 14
 K9-4 Sing Me Goodbye—PacemakerApr. 21
 X9-7 Win, Place & Showboat—Screen Song (6m.)...Apr. 28
 Z9-6 Yankee Doodle Donkey—Champion (8 m.)...May 5
 E9-5 Beach Peach—Popeye (7 m.)May 12
 X9-8 Jingle, Jangle, Jungle—Screen SongMay 19
 P9-6 Tarts & Flowers—Noveltoon (7 m.)May 26
 R9-7 Down Stream Highway—Sportlight (7 m.)...June 2
 P9-7 Ups an' Downs Derby—Noveltoon (7 m.)...June 9
 E9-6 Jitterbug Jive—PopeyeJune 23
 X9-9 Heap, Hep Injuns—Screen SongJune 30

RKO—One Reel

04107 Pluto's Heart Throb—Disney (7 m.)Jan. 6
 04305 Barnyard Skiing—Sportscope (8 m.)Jan. 13
 04108 Lion Around—Disney (7 m.)Jan. 20
 04206 Stars of Yesterday—Screenliner (10 m.)...Jan. 27
 04109 Pluto & the Gopher—Disney (7 m.)Feb. 10
 04306 Sports' Best—Sportscope (8 m.)Feb. 11
 04207 Auditions for August—Screenliner (9 m.)...Feb. 24
 04703 How to Ride a Horse—
 Disney (reissue) (7 m.)Feb. 24
 04110 The Brave Engineer—Disney (8 m.)Mar. 3
 04307 New Zealand Rainbow—SportscopeMar. 10
 04111 Crazy Over Daisy—Disney (6 m.)Mar. 24
 04112 The Wonder Dog—DisneyApr. 7

RKO—Two Reels

03202 Pal, Canine Detective—My Pal (20 m.)...Dec. 16
 03702 Shocking Affair—Leon Errol (17 m.)Dec. 23
 03604 Odor in the Court—Clark & McCullough
 (reissue) (21 m.)Dec. 30
 03105 You Can Make a Million—
 This is America (15 m.)Jan. 6
 03504 Sunk By the Census—
 Ed. Kennedy (reissue) (18 m.)Jan. 13
 03403 Groan & Grunt—Comedy Special (17 m.)...Jan. 20
 03703 High & Dizzy—Leon Errol (16 m.)Feb. 17
 03106 Expectant Father—This is America (16m.)...Mar. 3
 03404 Put Some Money in the Pot—
 Comedy Special (17 m.)Mar. 17
 03801 Basketball Headliners of 1950 (17 m.)Apr. 21

Republic—Two Reels

4981 James Brothers of Missouri—Serial (12 ep.)...Jan. 21
 4982 Radar Patrol vs Spy King (12 ep.)Apr. 15

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

5001 Comic Book Land—Terrytoon (7 m.)Jan.
 3001 Skiing Is Believing—Sports (9 m.)Jan.
 5021 Mississippi Swing—Terry. (reissue) (7 m.)...Jan.
 7001 Lawrence Welk & His Champagne Music—
 Melody (9 m.)Jan.
 5002 The Fox Hunt (Talk. Magpies)—Terry. (7 m.)...Feb.
 3002 From Jib to Topsail—Sports (9 m.)Feb.
 5022 What Happens at Night—Terry.
 (reissue) (7 m.)Feb.
 3051 Frolic in Sports—Sports (9 m.)Mar.
 5003 Better Late Than Never
 (Victor the Volunteer)—Terrytoon (7 m.)...Mar.
 7002 Red Ingle & His Gang—Melody (9 m.)Mar.
 5004 Mighty Mouse in Anti-Cats—Terry. (7 m.)...Mar.

- 5005 Aesop's Fables, Foiling the Fox—Terry (7 m.)...Apr.
 2051 Pattern of Progress—AdventureApr.
 5006 Dinky in the Beauty Shop—Terry. (7 m.)Apr.
 5023 Orphan Duck—Terrytoon (reissue) (7 m.)...May
 3003 Diving Maniacs—Sports (9 m.)May
 5007 A Merry Chase (Talk. Magpies)—
 Terry. (7 m.)May
 3004 Shooting the Rapids—SportsMay
 5008 Dream Walking—Terrytoon (7 m.)May
 5024 Just a Little Bull—Terry (reissue) (7 m.)...June
 8001 Mid-West Metropolis—Specialty (9 m.)...June
 5009 Law & Order (Mighty Mouse)—Terry. (7 m.)...June
 3006 Action with Rod & Reel—SportJune

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- Vol. 15 No. 12—A Chance to Live—
 March of Time (18 m.)Dec.
 (End of 1949 Season)
Beginning of 1950 Season
 Vol. 16 No. 1—Mid-Century: Half Way to Where—
 March of Time (17 m.)Feb.

United Artists—One Reel

- Melodies Reborn—Songs of America (10 m.)...Dec. 2
 Cherished Melodies—Songs of America (10 m.)...Dec. 31
 Southern Acapella—Songs of America (9 m.) ...Jan. 27
 Memorable Gems—Songs of America (9 m.)...Mar. 17
 The Tradition—Songs of America (9 m.)Mar. 25
 Tunes That Live—Songs of America (9 m.)...Apr. 14
 Glory Filled Spirituals—Songs of America (10m.)...May 12

Universal—One Reel

- 5323 Jolly Little Elves—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)...Jan. 2
 5324 Under the Spreading Blacksmith's Shop—
 Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)Jan. 30
 5343 Future Skippers—Variety Views (9 m.)...Jan. 30
 5325 Barber of Seville—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)...Feb. 13
 5383 Dream Dust—Sing & Be Happy (10 m.)...Feb. 20
 5326 Mother Goose on the Loose—
 Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)Mar. 6
 5344 Progress Island—Variety Views (9 m.)...Mar. 13
 5384 Sing Your Thanks—
 Sing & Be Happy (10 m.)Apr. 3
 5327 Candyland—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.) ...Apr. 10
 5328 The Beach Nut—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)...May 8
 5385 Harmony Hall—Sing & Be Happy (10 m.) ..May 29
 5328 Boogie Woogie Man—Cartune
 (reissue) (7 m.)June 12

Universal—Two Reels

- 5303 Freddie Slack & Orch.—Musical (15 m.)...Jan. 4
 5202 The Tiny Terrors Make Trouble—Special ...Jan. 18
 5304 Ethel Smith & the Henry King Orch.—
 Musical (15 m.)Feb. 1
 5353 The Fargo Phantom—
 Musical Western (24 m.)Feb. 9
 5305 Sweet Serenade—Musical (15 m.)Mar. 1
 5354 Gold Strike—Musical Western (25 m.)...Mar. 30
 5306 Skitch Henderson & Orch.—Musical (15m.)...Apr. 19
 5355 Rustlers' Ransom—Musical WesternMay 18
 5307 King Cole Trio—Musical (15 m.)not set

Vitaphone—One Reel

- 6703 Home, Tweet Home—Merrie Melody (7 m.)...Jan. 14
 6803 40 Boys and a Song—
 Melody Master (reissue) (10 m.)Jan. 14
 6504 Let's Go Boating—Sports Parade (10 m.)...Jan. 21
 6305 My Favorite Duck—
 B.R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)Jan. 28
 6704 Boobs in the Woods—Merrie Mel. (7 m.)...Jan. 28
 6604 Hands Tell the Story—Novelty (10 m.)...Feb. 4
 6403 So You Want to Throw a Party—
 Joe McDoakes (10 m.)Feb. 4
 6719 Mutiny on the Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)...Feb. 11
 6804 Bob Wills & His Texas Playboys—
 Melody Master (reissue) (10 m.)Feb. 11
 6505 That's Bully—Sports Parade (10 m.)Feb. 18
 6705 The Lion's Busy—Merry Melody (7 m.)...Feb. 18
 6306 The Sheepish Wolf—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)Mar. 4
 6706 The Scarlet Pumpernickel—
 Merrie Melody (7 m.)Mar. 4
 6605 Sitzmarks the Spot—Novelty (10 m.)Mar. 11
 6720 Homeless Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)Mar. 11
 6506 This Sporting World—
 Sports Parade (10 m.)Mar. 25
 6307 Double Chaser—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)Mar. 25
 6805 Hit Parade of Gay Nineties—
 Melody Master (reissue) (10 m.)Apr. 1

- 6707 Strife With Father—Merrie Melody (7 m.)...Apr. 1
 6404 So You Think You're Not Guilty—
 Joe McDoakes (10 m.)Apr. 15
 6708 The Hypo-Chondri-Cat—
 Merrie Melody (7 m.)Apr. 15
 6308 Fifth Column Mouse—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)Apr. 22
 6721 Big House Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)Apr. 22
 6507 Alpine Champions—Sports Parade (10 m.)...May 6
 6709 The Leghorn Blows at Midnight—
 Merrie Melody (7 m.)May 6
 6309 Inky & the Lion—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)...May 20
 6710 Bitter Hare—Merrie Melody (7 m.)May 20
 6711 An Egg Scramble—Merrie Melody (7 m.)...May 27
 6806 Leo Reisman & Orch.—Melody Master
 (reissue) (10 m.)May 27
 6310 Tic, Toc, Tuckered—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)June 3
 6508 Riviera Days—Sports Parade (10 m.)June 3
 6601 Horse & Buggy Days—Novelty (10 m.)...June 17
 6722 What's Up Doc?—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)...June 17
 6712 All Abir-r-r-d—Merrie Melody (7 m.)June 24
 6807 Matty Malneck & Orch.—Melody Master
 (reissue) (10 m.)June 24

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 6103 The Grass is Always Greener—
 Featurette (20 m.)Jan. 7
 6104 Vaudeville Days—Featurette (20 m.)Feb. 25
 6004 Women of Tomorrow—Special (20 m.)...Mar. 18
 6005 Danger is My Business—Special (20 m.)...Apr. 8
 6105 Double Fool—Featurette (20 m.)Apr. 29
 6006 Pony Express Days—Special (20 m.)...May 13
 6007 Give Me Liberty—Special (20 m.)...June 10

NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK

RELEASE DATES

Warner Pathe News

- 66 Mon. (E)Apr. 3
 67 Wed. (O)Apr. 5
 68 Mon. (E)Apr. 10
 69 Wed. (O)Apr. 12
 70 Mon. (E)Apr. 17
 71 Wed. (O)Apr. 19
 72 Mon. (E)Apr. 24
 73 Wed. (O)Apr. 26
 74 Mon. (E)May 1
 75 Wed. (O)May 3
 76 Mon. (E)May 8
 77 Wed. (O)May 10
 78 Mon. (E)May 15
 79 Wed. (O)May 17

Universal News

- 338 Thurs. (E) ..Mar. 30
 339 Tues. (O) ...Apr. 4
 340 Thurs. (E) ..Apr. 6
 341 Tues. (O) ...Apr. 11
 342 Thurs. (E) ..Apr. 13
 343 Tues. (O) ...Apr. 18
 344 Thurs. (E) ..Apr. 20
 345 Tues. (O) ...Apr. 25
 346 Thurs. (E) ..Apr. 27
 347 Tues. (O) ...May 2
 348 Thurs. (E) ..May 4
 349 Tues. (O) ...May 9
 350 Thurs. (E) ..May 11
 351 Tues. (O) ...May 16
 352 Thurs. (E) ..May 18

News of the Day

- 261 Mon. (O) ...Apr. 3
 262 Wed. (E) ...Apr. 5
 263 Mon. (O) ...Apr. 10
 264 Wed. (E) ...Apr. 12
 265 Mon. (O) ...Apr. 17
 266 Wed. (E) ...Apr. 19
 267 Mon. (O) ...Apr. 24
 268 Wed. (E) ...Apr. 26
 269 Mon. (O) ...May 1
 270 Wed. (E) ...May 3
 271 Mon. (O) ...May 8
 272 Wed. (E) ...May 10
 273 Mon. (O) ...May 15
 274 Wed. (E) ...May 17

Fox Movietone

- 27 Friday (O) ...Mar. 31
 28 Tues. (E)Apr. 4
 29 Friday (O) ...Apr. 7
 30 Tues. (E)Apr. 11
 31 Friday (O) ...Apr. 14
 32 Tues. (E)Apr. 18
 33 Friday (O) ...Apr. 21
 34 Tues. (E)Apr. 25
 35 Friday (O) ...Apr. 28
 36 Tues. (E)May 2
 37 Friday (O) ...May 5
 38 Tues. (E)May 9
 39 Friday (O) ...May 12
 40 Tues. (E)May 16
 41 Friday (O) ...May 19

Paramount News

- 64 Sat. (E)Apr. 1
 65 Wed. (O)Apr. 5
 66 Sat. (E)Apr. 8
 67 Wed. (O)Apr. 12
 68 Sat. (E)Apr. 15
 69 Wed. (O)Apr. 18
 70 Sat. (E)Apr. 22
 71 Wed. (O)Apr. 25
 72 Sat. (E)Apr. 29
 73 Wed. (O)May 3
 74 Sat. (E)May 6
 75 Wed. (O)May 10
 76 Sat. (E)May 13
 77 Wed. (O)May 17
 78 Sat. (E)May 20

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No. 14

"BINGSDAY" — A GREAT JOB OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Saturday, April 1, will never be forgotten by Front Royal, a peaceful little Virginia town of some nine thousand inhabitants, where Bing Crosby's newest Paramount picture, "Riding High," had its world premiere at the Park Theatre, a benefit showing climaxing a day of festivities that marked the dedication of a new Front Royal athletic field on which is to be built the "Bing Crosby Stadium."

The dedication and premiere were planned by the State of Virginia and the people of Front Royal in connection with their official designation of April 1 as "Bingsday," in honor of Crosby not only for his work on the screen and the radio but also for his various humanitarian activities.

From 5 A.M. Saturday morning until well after midnight a holiday atmosphere pervaded the town as more than twenty-five thousand people, drawn from the surrounding rural areas, poured into the community to pay homage to Crosby, whose appearance in person was the cause of the excitement.

The celebration started with a massive parade that was made up of some one hundred and fifty separate units, featuring high school bands, floats of fraternal, veterans and commercial organizations, the fire departments of many towns, and hundreds of school children, each carrying home-made signs hailing and welcoming Crosby.

The center of attraction, of course, was Bing himself, who brought up the rear of the parade perched on top of a fire department jeep.

The terminal point of the parade was the athletic field, where the townspeople, whose hearts Bing had captured with his easy-going, casual manner, gave him a standing ovation so filled with sincerity that it brought a lump to one's throat. Then they outdid themselves presenting him with a gigantic key to the city and numerous gifts.

After receiving tributes from local and visiting dignitaries, Bing rushed to the Park Theatre where, prior to a special free showing of the picture for children only, he held the stage alone for a full hour entertaining them with gags and songs. It was here that Bing showed that he has a heart as big as they come, for, when he learned that approximately one hundred children had been unable to squeeze into the theatre, he insisted that the only other theatre in town be opened to accommodate them, and then repeated his entire show for them, omitting nothing.

The next stop for Bing was the Warren County High School, where he awarded prizes in a cake-baking contest, thrilling the seventy-five women participants no end as he sampled each cake and complimented them on their culinary skill.

The premiere in the evening was a gala affair. Brilliant searchlights illuminated the sky in the best Hollywood tradition, and adding to the excitement was the arrival at the theatre of such notables as Vice President Barkley and

his charming wife, the Governors of Virginia and West Virginia, Senators Harry F. Byrd and A. Willis Robertson, Secretary of the Army Gray, and a host of other important people, who were greeted with sustained ovations by the huge crowds.

In the theatre, Bing, for the third time that day, put on his one-man show of songs and quips, which loudspeakers carried to the throngs outside. Here again Bing showed the stuff he is made of, for at the end of his stint, when it was announced that \$11,400 had been realized for the youth fund from the premiere and the day's different events, he modestly added his own contribution of \$3,600 to make it an even \$15,000.

He then rushed to a 'teen-agers' dance at the local high school, where he put on a show for the youngsters and danced with several of the girls.

For his final appearance of the night, he went to a square dance sponsored by the Textile Workers Union, and here again he put on a complete show.

As any one can judge from a reading of this account, Bing Crosby's schedule for the day was a back-breaking one, but he entered into the spirit of the day with genuine enthusiasm and sincerity, obviously enjoying every minute of it. He outdid himself in every respect. When the crowd shouted, "Sing, Bing!" he grinned back and said: "I'll sing until you're unconscious." And the crowd loved him for it. Even the more than fifty hardened representatives of the press and radio, who covered the proceedings, were impressed deeply by the way he gave of himself.

"Bingsday" received nation-wide publicity through the press and radio, and from the angle of showmanship it is a great send-off for "Riding High." But even more important is the fact that what took place at Front Royal stands out as one of the finest examples of good public relations for the motion picture industry. When a company like Paramount sets the world premiere of one of its most important pictures in a small community many people never heard of, and when a star of the caliber of Bing Crosby goes to such a community to participate in the festivities and to help raise funds for the benefit of the local youngsters, it is a public relations job of the first order, one that should do much to take away the bad taste left by the behavior of such personalities as Ingrid Bergman and Rita Hayworth, and by the ravings and rantings of Senator Edwin C. Johnston.

Max E. Youngstein, Paramount's publicity chief, Jerry Pickman, his aide, and all the others on his alert publicity staff, deserve great credit for their expert handling of this event.

Above all, however, every one in the motion picture industry may well be proud of Bing Crosby.

Because of limited space in this week's issue, the third article giving the views of top industry leaders on television and its effect on the motion picture business will be published in next week's issue.

"The Lawless" with Macdonald Carey and Gail Russell

(Paramount, July; time, 83 min.)

"The Lawless" is the finest picture ever turned out by the Pine-Thomas producing team. Dealing with racial prejudice and bigotry in a small California town, where many of the inhabitants are of Mexican descent, it is a tense melodrama that puts the spotlight forcefully on an important social problem. The direction and acting are of the first order, with an exceptionally good performance turned in by Macdonald Carey, as the courageous local newspaper editor, who defies the town's bigots to take up the defense of a Mexican-American youth unjustly accused of murder. The action is filled with suspense and tension, particularly in the chase scenes, and in the sequence where an angered mob wrecks Carey's newspaper plant. Although it offers no solution to the problem, the story is, from a social standpoint, of strong significance in that its depiction of bigotry at its ugliest points up the need for more tolerance towards one's fellow-man:—

Carey, a former big-city reporter, had "retired" to the comparative easy life of editor and publisher of a small-town paper in a community in the heart of the northern California fruit district. He covers a dance sponsored by the fruit pickers, most of whom were of Mexican descent, and there meets Gail Russell who, with her father, published a small Mexican weekly in the city. During the dance, a group of wealthy boys from the better side of town, headed by John Sands, pick a fight with Lalo Rios and Maurice Jara, two youthful Mexican boys who had accidentally bumped into Sands' car earlier in the day. The police arrive and in the free-for-all Rios unintentionally strikes a policeman. He is caught after a chase and, as the police return with him, their car is wrecked in an accident, killing one officer. Rios escapes unharmed and hides in a farm barn. He is discovered by the farmer's young daughter who, turning to run, strikes her head and is knocked senseless. When she is found, Rios is blamed for attempting to attack her. Carey, convinced that the boy is innocent, joins the wide manhunt on for him and, by finding the youth and turning him over to the authorities, saves him from a possible lynching. Carey then takes up the boy's defense editorially, and in so doing angers the injured girl's father. A mob is formed and Carey's newspaper plant is wrecked completely. John Hoyt, Sands' father, realizing that his son is responsible for Rios' trouble, goes to Carey and offers to finance another paper. Moreover, he bails Rios out of jail and arranges to get him the best legal help. Carey goes to Gail's small plant, where the facilities are made available for him to put out a small daily until his new plant is ready.

It was produced by William H. Pine and William C. Thomas, and directed by Joseph Losey, from an original screen play by Geoffrey Homes.

Suitable for the family.

"The Capture" with Teresa Wright and Lew Ayres

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 91 min.)

Only moderately interesting. Set against an outdoor Mexican background, it is a moody melodrama with psychological overtones, revolving around a man's struggle with his conscience when he is haunted by the feeling that a payroll robber he had killed had been innocent. Not only is the story thin and unrealistic, but it lacks dramatic force and is difficult to follow because of the numerous flashbacks. Moreover, the pace is slow and, though it generates some suspense in several of the situations, the action on the whole has a minimum of excitement. The direction and the acting are competent, but the material is weak:—

The story opens with Lew Ayres, a wounded American fugitive, seeking refuge in the home of Victor Jory, a Mexican priest. Under the priest's sympathetic questioning, Ayres reveals that, one year previously, as field boss for an American oil refinery in Mexico, he had mortally wounded a man suspected of stealing the company's payroll, and the man had died protesting his innocence. Although cleared at

the inquest, his conscience had bothered him, for he suspected that the man had been telling the truth. He had sought out Teresa Wright, the dead man's widow, and assuming another identity had accepted a job as handyman on her little ranch. Teresa, having discovered his identity, had taken her revenge by overworking him, but she had eventually fallen in love with him and they had married. The matter of her dead husband's guilt or innocence still preyed on his conscience, however, and he felt that his marriage could not be successful until he learned the truth. He had started an investigation, and numerous clues had enabled him to pin the guilt on Barry Kelley, a former employee of the oil company, whom he had killed accidentally in a scuffle. Instead of giving himself up to the police, he had fled, in much the same manner as Teresa's dead husband, and he soon found himself the object of a vast manhunt. As he finishes telling his story to the priest, Mexican troops arrive and order him to surrender. Teresa, too, arrives, and her pleadings, backed by the priest, persuade Ayres to give himself up. He rides off to prison, hopeful that his story will convince the Mexican courts.

The story was written and produced by Niven Busch, and directed by John Sturges.

Although unobjectionable, it seems best suited for mature minds.

"The Damned Don't Cry" with Joan Crawford and David Brian

(Warner Bros., May 13; time, 103 min.)

Distasteful is the word for this unpleasant drama about the unsavory career of a calculating woman. Since there is nothing appealing about the story, its box-office chances will depend on the drawing power of Joan Crawford. Some sympathy is felt for Miss Crawford at the beginning because of her bleak existence as a drab housewife, but this is dissipated once she leaves her husband, for she then becomes an unprincipled, conniving woman as she progresses from a dress model of questionable morals to the fashionable mistress of the suave married leader of a crime syndicate. None of the other principal characters are sympathetic, and at times the action is violently brutal. The overall mood of the film is sordid, unethical and unmoral, and it leaves a feeling of bad taste:—

Unhappily married to Richard Egan, a field worker, Joan leaves him when their little son is killed in an accident. She becomes a model in a wholesale dress establishment, and quickly learns that there is considerable profit entertaining the buyers after business hours. She becomes friendly with Kent Smith, a mild-mannered accountant and, through her connections in a gambling club, obtains a job for him at a fabulous wage and eventually steers him into becoming the head accountant for an international crime syndicate headed by David Brian. She drops Smith and sets her cap for Brian, who is soon attracted to her. He changes her name, provides her with a social background and, with the aid of Selena Royle, a social secretary, sees to it that she acquires cultural polish. He refuses, however, to leave his wife, and keeps her as his mistress. When Brian suspects Steve Cochran, head of his West Coast operations, of rebellion, he sends Joan to the Coast to check on Cochran's activities. Cochran, unaware of her connection with Brian, falls in love with her. She in turn is won by his charm and finds herself unwilling to expose his plot to dispose of Brian. Meanwhile Brian, learning that Joan is double-crossing him, comes to California and gives her a severe beating. Cochran, coming to call on her, is killed by Brian. Joan flees in fear of her life and hides out in the home of her parents. Smith, still in love with her, comes to her aid. Brian arrives shortly thereafter and, in an exchange of shots, is killed by Smith, whose own life is saved when she steps in front of him and stops a bullet discharged from Brian's gun. It ends inconclusively, with the audience left to decide if Joan will recover from the wound.

It was produced by Jerry Wald and directed by Vincent Sherman from a screen play by Harold Medford and Jerome Weidman, based on a story by Gertrude Walker.

Strictly adult fare.

**"Wagonmaster" with Ben Johnson,
Joanne Dru and Ward Bond**

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 86 min.)

From the standpoint of awe-inspiring outdoor scenery and fine photography, this western, directed by John Ford, is impressive. As entertainment, however, it is only mildly interesting, mainly because it lacks sufficient rousing action and suspense, such as one expects to find in pictures of this type. There is not much to the story, which concerns itself with the trek of a Mormon wagon train from Illinois to Utah, but the characterizations are colorful, and there is some tension because of the fact that a group of vicious outlaws attach themselves to the train to evade capture by a posse. There is some comedy, romance and square dancing:—

Ben Johnson and Harry Carey, Jr., two young horse traders, are hired by Ward Bond, a fiery-tempered Mormon elder, to guide his wagon train across the desert to the San Juan region. With Johnson as wagonmaster, they start out across the parched desert and eventually come upon a stranded medicine show caravan, whose members included Alan Mowbray, his companion, Ruth Clifford, and Joanne Dru, a dancer, all obviously drunk because they had run out of water and drank liquor. Despite the objections of some of the Mormons, Bond agrees to let them join the wagon train. Johnson becomes interested in Joanne, while Carey is attracted to Kathleen O'Malley, a Mormon girl. Complications arise when five sinister outlaws, fleeing from a posse, get the drop on the Mormons, take away their guns, and decide to stay with the wagon train until it is safe to leave. Later, when the posse catches up with the wagon train, Bond misleads the Marshal to avert a massacre and sends the posse away. Next the wagon train encounters a tribe of suspicious Navajos, and the Mormons make friends with them at an Indian dance. During the celebration, one of the outlaws attacks a Navajo girl, and Bond, to appease the Indians, has the offender whipped savagely while tied to a wagon wheel. The outlaws resent the whipping, and later, when the wagon train gets under way, they attempt to kill Bond. Carey, who had concealed a gun for just such an emergency, opens fire and kills Charles Kemper, the outlaw leader. Johnson manages to get his hands on the dead man's gun and, in a swift battle, helps Carey to slay the other outlaws. The wagon train then proceeds to its destination safely, with Johnson and Carey thinking about wedding bells.

It is an Argosy Pictures production, directed by John Ford from a screen play by Frank Nugent and Patrick Ford. Suitable for the family.

**"Cargo to Capetown"
with Broderick Crawford, Ellen Drew
and John Ireland**

(Columbia, April; time, 80 min.)

A fair enough sea adventure melodrama that does not rise above the level of program fare. The story itself is loosely written and is frequently illogical, but since it has plentiful action and excitement it should please the indiscriminating movie-goers. Added value is given the picture by the fact that it stars Broderick Crawford, this year's Academy Award winner, as well as John Ireland, who had a principal role in "All the King's Men," winner of the best picture award. Neither one, however, is given much of a chance by the ordinary script:—

Ireland, a sea captain without a ship and without promise of one, is offered a steady job provided he takes a battered old oil tanker out to sea in the teeth of a hurricane and get it to Capetown on schedule. With the aid of Crawford, a chief engineer and his pal, Ireland shanghai a crew at a local saloon. He then gets Crawford drunk and shanghai him also, not only because he needed a chief engineer, but also because he wanted to stop Crawford from marrying Ellen Drew, his (Ireland's) former girl-friend, who had jilted him. Ellen, learning that Crawford had been shanghai, manages to get aboard the ship and, at gunpoint,

demands that Crawford be put ashore. Ireland disarms her, carefully preserving the fingerprints on the gun, and threatens to jail her if she tells Crawford that he had been shanghai. With Ellen on board, Crawford is satisfied with his lot, and helps Ireland to run the ship and control the unruly crew. Meanwhile Ellen's love for Ireland is reawakened by the kindness he shows for an unfortunate cabin boy. Matters become complicated when one of the crew informs Crawford that Ellen used to be Ireland's girl. Crawford, angered, engages Ireland in a bitter fist fight. He then compels Ireland, as captain, to marry him and Ellen. Just as the ceremony is over, one of the oil tanks explodes. The two men forget their differences to fight the blaze with live steam from the boilers. In the course of events, Crawford is overcome by the fumes and falls half-unconscious on the floor of the engine room. Ireland, at the risk of his own life, drags him to safety. Lying there, however, Crawford overhears Ellen fretting for Ireland's safety, and comes to the realization that she and Ireland were still in love. He agrees to divorce her when they land in Capetown so that Ireland may marry her.

The story was written and produced by Lionel Houser, and directed by Earl McEvoy.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Comanche Territory" with
Macdonald Carey and Maureen O'Hara**

(Univ.-Int'l, May; time, 76 min.)

Very fine. No exhibitor need have any misgivings about exploiting it to the limit, for it is the best Indian thriller released in years. The action is fast and the impressive Technicolor photography adds realism to it. Of the many thrilling situations, a novel one is the duel between Macdonald Carey, using a knife, and the Indian Chief's son, using a tomahawk; it should keep many a spectator on the edge of his seat. The fight in the end, where the Indians battle against the lawless whites, is likewise thrilling, and is further enhanced by the sight of Maureen O'Hara driving at top speed, with the whites in pursuit, a wagon containing rifles for the Indians. The direction and acting are excellent:

Macdonald Carey, wealthy designer of the Bowie hunting knife, is sent to the Comanche territory by President Jackson to renew a treaty with the Indians to allow whites to mine silver on their land. After several encounters with the Comanches, headed by Pedro de Cordoba, who claims that the whites had violated the existing treaty, Carey learns that the new treaty had been stolen from Will Geer, a former Congressman and ex-Indian fighter, who had brought it from Washington. Carey sets out to learn who had robbed Geer, and in due time discovers that it was Maureen O'Hara, owner of the local bank and town saloon, who, together with her brother, Charles Drake, headed a group of white renegades who planned to move in on the territory and grab the silver by means of a forged treaty. A feud develops between Maureen and Carey, but both soon find themselves falling in love. He convinces her that, if the treaty were renewed, the territory would prosper and the Comanches would not go on the war path. But when Maureen asks her brother to deliver the treaty to Carey, he claims falsely to have torn it up, planning to keep it for his own purposes. Through Geer, Carey learns that Drake and his cutthroats were set to launch an attack against the Comanches immediately, and he believes that Maureen had double-crossed him. He rushes to the Comanche camp, informs the chief of the impending attack, and lays down the strategy for the defense. Maureen, shocked that Carey had mistrusted her, rushes to her brother's camp and denounces him, then steals a wagon full of rifles, which she drives wildly to the Comanches, enabling them to arm themselves and repel the lawless element. Carey leaves for Washington to report to the President, promising Maureen that he will return to her.

It was produced by Leonard Goldstein and directed by George Sherman from an original story and screen play by Lewis Meltzer.

Good for the entire family.

"Beware of Blondie" with Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 66 min.)

The followers of the "Bumsteeds" are due for a disappointment, for this latest picture of the series is the poorest produced in several years. The story is banal, and at no time holds one's interest. This time the plot revolves around the trouble Arthur Lake gets himself into when he is left in charge of the office by his boss, who leaves him with several blank checks, signed. He becomes involved with Adele Jergens, one of a group of blackmailers, who, posing as the owner of a well known corporation, plans to fleece him by pretending that she was ready to sign a construction contract. Gossipy neighbors jump to the wrong conclusion when they see Lake with Adele, and lead Penny Singleton, his wife, to believe that he is a two-timer. Meanwhile Adele manages to lure Lake to her hotel room, where one of the blackmailers, pretending to be her infuriated husband, threatens to go to the newspapers unless he is paid five thousand dollars. Adele, by promising to reimburse Lake, induces him to fill out one of his boss' signed checks. On the following day, Lake learns that he had been swindled. He tells Penny about his predicament, and she offers to mortgage their home to reimburse the boss. But it all turns out for the best when the boss reveals that, through a mistake, the checks he had signed were worthless because they had been drawn on an account he had closed months previously. The story is padded to the extreme, the action is silly, and the direction and acting poor.

It was produced by Milton Feldman and directed by Edward Bernds from a story and screen play by Jack Henley, based upon the comic strip created by Chic Young.

Harmless for family patronage.

"Messenger of Peace" with John Beal, Peggy Stewart and Paul Guilfoyle

(Astor Pictures, no rel. date set; time, 87 min.)

Very good! The proof that satisfying pictures do not require pretentious stories and budgets is furnished by this picture. Dealing with the simple life of a pastor from his days as a divinity student until his retirement, it is a deeply appealing drama of a kindly soul, told in heart-warming, sympathetic and impressive terms. How he overcomes the frailties of some of the people who had charged him with the task of ministering to their spiritual needs is most inspiring, and it should make many persons who see the picture more tolerant towards their fellow-men. The establishment of a church and congregation in a small backwoods town; the trials and tribulations of being transferred to another church; the loyalty of the pastor's wife, who follows her husband without complaint; the whole-hearted tribute paid to the pastor by his congregation upon his retirement—all this and more make for emotion-stirring situations that touch one's heartstrings. John Beal, as the pastor, and Peggy Stewart, as his charming, understanding wife, are very good, as is Paul Guilfoyle, as the town drunkard who becomes a devout church-goer and regains his self respect. Properly exploited, the picture, which is sure to have the backing of religious groups, should do very well as the box-office.—

Beal, a young pastor, is sent to a backwoods town to organize a congregation and build a church. He finds that the lack of spiritual guidance had made the townspeople uneasy and unfriendly towards one another. His biggest problems are Paul Guilfoyle, an habitual drunkard, and William Gould, a God-fearing but intolerant man, who objected to his daughter's love for a young "moon-shiner," a young man who reforms and marries her. With the aid of Peggy Stewart, who becomes his devoted wife, Beal patiently guides the people through their different problems and eventually brings about a better understanding among all concerned. Years later, he is shifted to a larger community, one with a church but with few church-goers. He immediately sets about making friends and serving the community in every way possible, and before long his efforts are rewarded by full attendance at the church. Tragedy strikes when his eldest son is killed in World War I, but he does not let this stand in the way of his duty. Finally old and gray, he is retired on a pension and given a warm farewell by the grateful congregation.

It was produced by Roland Reed and directed by Frank Strayer from a screen play by Glenn Tryon, based on a story by Henry Rische.

Excellent for the family.

"A Run for Your Money" with an all-British cast

(Univ.-Int'l, no rel. date set; time, 83 min.)

An amusing British-made comedy, revolving around the misadventures of two young Welsh coal miners, who win a free trip to London and a cash prize for mining the most coal in a nationwide competition. The characterizations are very good, and the situations highly comical, but its appeal

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probably will be limited to those who patronize art houses and other theatres that specialize in British pictures, for the thick Welsh brogue used by the players is at times difficult to understand. The acting is competent, but the players are unknown in this country.

Briefly, the story has two brothers, Donald Houston and Meredith Edwards, young Welsh miners, heading for London to collect their prize from a London newspaper. Alec Guinness, a meek gardening columnist, is assigned by the newspaper to meet the brothers and look after them. Guinness misses them at the station, and to make matters even more complicated the brothers become separated, with Houston falling into the clutches of Moira Lister, a demure gold-digger, who helps him to collect the money and then lays plans to separate him from it. Meanwhile, Edwards meets up with Hugh Griffith, an old friend with a perpetual thirst, who had been reduced to singing in the streets for a living. The action boils down to a continuing chase, with one brother pursuing the other, the girl being pursued by the brother she victimizes, and all being chased by Guinness, still trying to catch up with his charges. All this makes for many amusing incidents in and out of subways, buses, saloons and a theatre, until the brothers finally meet on the return train home, their money recovered from a repentant Moira.

It was produced by Michael Balcon and directed by Charles Frend, from a screen play by the director, Richard Hughes and Leslie Norman, based on a story by Clifford Evans.

Adult fare.

"Rapture" with Glenn Langan and Elsy Albiin

(Film Classics, April; time, 80 min.)

A heavy and slow entertainment. The acting of all the principal players is fine, and Elsy Albiin is a beautiful girl and her part is sympathetic, but the movement is too heavy for the picture to benefit from these advantages. Some judicious cutting might speed up the action considerably, even though the theme's heaviness will remain. The picture has been produced in Italy and the background is all Italian. The dark photography is in keeping with the somber mood of the story:—

While returning to Rome from a weekend in the country, Glenn Langan, a popular young Roman sculptor, is so attracted by the beauty of an old castle and its tower that he returns to investigate it. That night he sees, what appears to him to be, a statue in the lake come to life and dive into the water. He rents a bungalow nearby and, from memory, creates the body of the statue. Eduardo Ciannelli, caretaker of the castle, assists Langan in his work, and introduces him to Elsy, daughter of Douglas Dumbille, owner of the castle. Fascinated by Elsy's beauty, Langan falls in love with her, but her father informs him that her mind is not right. Elsy becomes hopelessly sad when Langan decides to return to Rome to finish the statue by chiseling the head with her features. While driving to Rome, Langan stops to assist Lorraine Miller, a flirtatious woman, whose car had stalled. They find shelter in a shed during a violent rain-storm, and that night the two have an affair. Langan's statue, Rapture, wins first prize in an exhibition. He returns to the castle, where he is shocked to meet Lorraine, whom Elsy introduces as her sister. The scheming Lorraine tries to win Langan for herself, and reveals to her sister what had happened between them. Moreover, she discloses that she had been the vision who had inspired the statue. Elsy suffers a breakdown and destroys the statue. Langan wants to marry her, but her father refuses on the ground that she is mentally ill. Elsy, overhearing the conversation, mounts the castle tower and leaps to her death.

It was produced by David H. Pelham and directed by Goffredo Alessandrini, from a story by Geza Herczeg, who collaborated on the screen play with the director and John C. Shepridge.

Adult fare.

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LET THE DISTRIBUTORS STOP PENALIZING THE EXHIBITOR FOR HIS SHOWMANSHIP WORK

Speaking at the 20th Century-Fox Showmanship meeting in Dallas on March 23, Colonel Harry A. Cole, national Allied leader from Texas, had this to say, in part:

"... You all know hundreds and thousands of instances where exhibitors refused to do any showmanship work whatsoever, where the result is a very small return to their individual net profit and a very large return to the profit of the distribution branch, and where the almost immediate result is future increased film rentals obviously stemming from the showman's own investment and work. Many exhibitors (and I know scores of them) have openly stated that they deliberately kill such results rather than attempt to get more dollars into the box-office. The profit motive has been eliminated (or reversed) in their case, and why should a man invest his time and money to get more dollars into the industry without retaining for himself a fair share of such increase?"

What Colonel Cole said at that meeting is only too true, as the distributors very well know. An exhibitor knows that, if he puts a picture over in a big way, his film rentals will go up, not only with the company whose picture he has exploited, but also with other companies, who learn of the exhibitor's success through the grapevine method, which unfortunately prevails in the industry. Accordingly, he refuses to put extra effort behind the exploitation of a picture. And yet this attitude can be reversed. The exhibitor can be induced to put more showmanship behind the meritorious pictures he books to boost receipts, without being penalized afterwards.

How?

Several years ago Mike Vogel, the man whose brains overflow with original exploitation ideas, submitted to the general sales manager of a major film company a plan whereby the sliding scale could be adopted in reverse. That is, starting from a certain point of gross receipts, and a certain point of percentage, the exhibitor's percentage of the take increases as the receipts keep increasing so that he is offered an incentive to work, instead of assuming the attitude that Colonel Cole so well described at the Fox Showmanship meeting in Dallas.

But what did this general sales manager say to Mr. Vogel? The plan, being radical, would destroy the existing order, and he could not undertake to submit it to his company.

The present system of the sliding scale whereby the more the exhibitor takes in the more he pays is illogical. In any other business, just imagine what the customer would say to the manufacturer if he was asked to pay more for the goods he was about to buy than another customer who bought one-quarter the quantity!

Perhaps at the time Mr. Vogel submitted this iconoclastic plan to the distribution head conditions were lush and no one would want to take the chance of disturbing the prevailing order of things, but conditions are now different; we have television to contend with, and a new sales system, one that will induce the exhibitor to roll up his sleeves and go to work, virtually dragging people into the theatre, is needed; it is, as a matter of fact, essential.

What company will be farsighted enough to institute the Vogel plan of a sliding scale in reverse?

AN ABLE DEFENSE SPOILED

Published in the April 1 issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature* is an article by Samuel Goldwyn in answer to the criticism of American motion pictures by Norman Cousins, vice-president of the *Saturday Review* corporation.

Mr. Cousins' criticism was occasioned by the type of some of the American pictures that are sent abroad; he feels that they discredit America by "distorting American life."

Mr. Goldwyn's defense is able and impressive. Part of his article reads as follows: "... should any one (whether Governmental or intra-industry) have the right to decide whether certain of our motion pictures be chosen or rejected for export to foreign countries on political instead of on strictly entertainment grounds?"

"If on a political basis, 'distortion' can become anything with which one may disagree. . . .

"It is difficult for me to see how any American can be a party to a political basis for selection or rejection of motion pictures for export—or of books—or of magazines—or of newspapers—or of any other product which stems from a literary idea. Today we may have one foreign policy, one propaganda theme; but tomorrow we may have another! Who is wise enough to decide which is right? Must the Congressional opposition accept our foreign policy or be 'distorters'? . . ."

Mr. Goldwyn sets forth a number of other sensible arguments against restricting the type of pictures that may be sent abroad when the decision is made on a political, and not on an entertainment, basis.

Of course, certain phases of Mr. Goldwyn's arguments may be controverted, but on the whole his defense, in answer to criticism made by a person who is not connected with the motion picture industry and who speaks only as an amateur, is able and convincing.

But the benefit the motion picture industry derived from Mr. Goldwyn's article in the *Saturday Review of Literature* has been nullified by his article, "Television's Challenge to the Movies," printed in the Sunday magazine section of the March 26 issue of the *New York Times*. In that article Mr. Goldwyn discussed the possible effect of television on the movies.

"America's motion picture industry," he said, "is faced with a powerful and rapidly growing contender for the public's leisure-time attention—television. The speed with which television has captured the public interest confronts Hollywood with an immediate challenge.

"The extent of that challenge was summed up for me recently by a New York banker. Discussing the small-loans department of his bank, which grants loans up to \$300 without security, he said: 'Applicants for these loans must fill out blanks explaining why they want the money and how they plan to repay it. The majority of present-day applicants write "television set" as their reason for borrowing. Regarding payment, they state: 'We will save the money by cutting down on the number of times we go to the movies each week!'

"Hollywood must face the facts squarely. Television, which in the beginning was little more than a gimmick used by tavern keepers to induce patrons to linger over another drink, is today a lusty billion-dollar-baby—and growing like Paul Bunyan. The public has invested almost a billion dollars in at least three and a half million home sets. And more than 70 per cent of that amount has been spent in the last

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**"No Sad Songs for Me"
with Margaret Sullivan, Wendell Corey
and Viveca Lindfors**

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 89 min.)

This is an emotion-grIPPING, deeply moving drama, revolving around a young wife and mother who suddenly learns that she is doomed to die within ten months from cancer. The theme is tragic, but it emerges as a story of high courage and selflessness because of the fact that the heroine, keeping her fate a secret from her husband, intelligently plans for the future happiness of her family as she bravely awaits her impending doom. Worked into the story in an adult way is the extra-marital interest of her husband in another woman, whom she grooms to take her place. Margaret Sullivan, after a lengthy absence, comes back to the screen with an exceedingly fine performance as the doomed woman, a role that in less competent hands might not have been so credible. Equally good are Wendell Corey, as the husband, and Viveca Lindfors, as the other woman. Although it treats of cancer, the film is not as morbid as one would suspect. It is, however, a picture that will best be appreciated by adult audiences, particularly women:—

Margaret, happily married to Corey, an engineer, looks forward to the prospect of having another child. She is horrified to learn from her doctor (John McIntire) that she is not going to have a child, and that, instead, she will die from cancer within ten months. Pledging the doctor to secrecy to keep the truth from Corey and her daughter (Natalie Wood), Margaret determines to make the most of her remaining days. Meanwhile Corey, though deeply in love with Margaret, becomes attracted to Viveca Lindfors, his new assistant. Aware of the affair, Margaret leaves town to visit her father and mull over the problem. There she meets and old friend whose wife had died, and who, in his loneliness, had taken up with an unsuitable woman. Struck with the thought of what would happen to Corey and her daughter after her death, Margaret comes to the conclusion that Viveca would make him a good wife, and that she would be a sympathetic stepmother to Natalie. She returns home and learns that Corey had decided to forget Viveca, who was preparing to leave town. Margaret persuades her to stay and, in the weeks that follow, makes a genuine friend of Viveca and grooms her to take her place. Corey eventually learns about Margaret's ailment. Powerless to help, he takes her on a second honeymoon to Mexico. She dies there, and Corey returns home to pick up his life with Viveca and his daughter.

It was produced by Buddy Adler and directed by Rudolph Mates from a screen play by Howard Koch, based on a story by Ruth Southard.

Adult fare.

**"I Was a Shoplifter" with Scott Brady,
Mona Freeman and Andrea King**

(Univ.-Int'l, May; time, 74 min.)

A fairly good crime-does-not-pay program melodrama. The story, which has an undercover agent rounding up a gang of thieves after becoming one of them, follows a familiar formula, but it is given a lift by the semi-documentary treatment, which shows in detail the methods employed by professional shoplifters and kleptomaniacs who prey on department stores. The film moves at a brisk pace, and it generates enough excitement and suspense to satisfy most action fans. The direction is good, and the players adequately fill the demands of their roles:—

Mona Freeman, a kleptomaniac and daughter of a judge, is arrested for shoplifting in a department store, just as Scott Brady is arrested on a similar charge. Charles Drake, the store's chief detective, dismisses Mona, a first offender, after she signs a confession. Brady, however, with a long record, is sent to police headquarters. There he is revealed as an undercover agent trying to crack a shoplifting ring. The gang, he had learned, recruited their members from among first offenders by threatening them with exposure. Brady shadows Mona in the hope that the gang will contact her, and his efforts are rewarded when Andrea King

visits her and arranges to meet her at a night-club that evening. There, Andrea shows her a photostat copy of her confession and blackmails her into agreeing to work as a shoplifter. Meanwhile Brady, supposedly out on bail, worms his way into the gang and, before long, gets a line on their general operations. He is unable, however, to learn the identity of the man with access to the confessions. When Mona is sent to San Diego to carry out a specific robbery, Brady accompanies her secretly, unaware that he had been seen by one of the gang. He reveals to her that he is an undercover agent, and she agrees to act as a decoy to trap the gang. But Andrea, by this time aware of Brady's identity, changes her plans, makes Mona her prisoner, and heads for Mexico with the rest of the gang. Brady and the police catch up with them and, with the aid of the Mexican authorities, arrest the gang and rescue Mona. Returning to Los Angeles, Brady traps Drake, the store detective, as the gang's "inside man."

It was produced by Leonard Goldstein and directed by Charles Lamont from a story and screen play by Irving Glassberg.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Annie Get Your Gun" with Betty Hutton,
Howard Keel, Louis Calhern,
and Edward Arnold**

(MGM, no rel. date set; time, 107 min.)

Excellent! It is a smash Technicolor musical, truly the answer to an exhibitor's prayer. Based on the highly successful Rodgers-Hammerstein Broadway musical play of the same title, with music and lyrics by Irving Berlin, it holds one captivated from start to finish with the brilliance of its color photography, the lavish sets, the huge cast, the colorful costumes, the lilting Berlin tunes and, foremost, the truly wonderful performance given by the dynamic Betty Hutton, as "Annie Oakley." The vitality and zest with which she plays the role and sings the songs is sheer delight to watch and hear. The action moves at a hectic pace from the opening to the closing shot, and it is laden to the brim with comedy situations and gags, cowboys, Indians, sharpshooting and daredevil riding. One comedy production number that will have audiences howling with glee is where Miss Hutton is inducted into an Indian tribe headed by J. Carrol Naish, as "Sitting Bull." Louis Calhern, as "Buffalo Bill," Edward Arnold, as "Pawnee Bill," and Keenan Wynn, as manager of the wild west show, contribute much to the entertainment values. Howard Keel, a handsome newcomer, has a fine baritone voice, and he does exceptionally as the object of Miss Hutton's affections. "Annie Get Your Gun" is one of the greatest musical entertainments ever produced, one an exhibitor may well be proud to show to his patrons.

The story, which serves as a framework for the songs and comedy situations, opens in Cincinnati, where Betty, a backwoods girl with incredible shooting prowess, enters into a match with Keel, champion sharpshooter of Buffalo Bill's show, and beats him. She is given a job in the show and in due time falls head over heels in love with Keel, who soon falls for her charms. To make Keel proud of her, Betty secretly rehearses a new act, which she presents at the insistence of Wynn in order to boost attendance. Her performance is so sensational that she is given billing above Keel. Furious, Keel breaks off his romance with her and joins Pawnee Bill's rival show. Although heartbroken, Betty goes on to become a great star. She goes to Europe with the troupe and gives one command performance after another for royalty. But the show goes broke for lack of revenue, and the troupe heads back to New York to effect a merger with Pawnee Bill. In New York, Betty and Keel become reconciled, but the reunion is shortlived when both get into an argument over who is the best sharpshooter in the world. She challenges him to another match. Sitting Bull, a romanticist at heart, advises Betty to lose the match in order to win her man. She sees the light and follows his advice.

It was produced by Arthur Freed and directed by George Sidney from a screen play by Sidney Sheldon, based on the book by Herbert and Dorothy Fields.

Excellent for the entire family.

"The Big Lift" with Montgomery Clift and Paul Douglas

(20th Century-Fox, May; time, 120 min.)

Very good! Skillfully directed and capably acted, it is an absorbing postwar drama, presented in a way that is sure to score with all types of audiences. It revolves around the Berlin airlift, during the Russian blockade, and around an American "GI," played by Montgomery Clift, who is almost tricked into marriage by a beautiful but deceitful German girl. Filmed entirely in Berlin, its documentary-like depiction of the airlift operations is taut and exciting, and the photography, which vividly shows the hazards encountered by the Allied planes in the effort to keep the western sector of Berlin supplied with coal and food, is superb. Not only is the well written story interesting, but it offers a fascinating study of the German people through an assortment of varied characters and, without preachment or flag-waving, makes out a strong case for the democratic way of life. Although it is basically serious, the story is loaded with humorous touches, some of which will make audiences howl with delight. A particularly good performance is turned in by Paul Douglas, as Clift's buddy, a blustering "GI" who makes no bones about his mistrust of all Germans because of his experiences in a prison camp. Douglas' romance with Bruni Lobel, a German girl eager to learn all about democracy, is mostly on the humorous side, but it points up the fact that all Germans cannot be judged by the actions of a few. Cornell Borchers, as the girl who tries to hoodwink Clift, is a fine German actress, and many movie-goers will look forward to seeing her in future American pictures.

Briefly, the story has Clift meeting Cornell when, in behalf of the women of Berlin, she presents the crew of his plane with a reward for their services. He falls in love with her, and she tells him that her husband had been killed in Russia, and that her father, a professor, had been "liquidated" by the Nazis for speaking out against them. Douglas, unimpressed by Clift's love for Cornell, digs up evidence proving that both her husband and father had been ardent Nazis. When Clift confronts her, she admits that she had lied to make him more sympathetic towards her. He does not blame her and, to show his faith, asks her to marry him. He goes through much red tape to get permission to marry, but, on the day set for their wedding, a neighbor of Cornell's, who had taken a liking to Clift, intercepts a letter she had addressed to a man in St. Louis. He reads the letter and learns that it is to her husband, still alive, and that she planned to rejoin him after reaching the United States and divorcing Clift. Given the letter, Clift, now convinced of her deceit, denounces her and prepares to return to the United States alone.

It was written and directed by George Seaton, and produced by William Perlberg.

Unobjectionable for the family.

"A Modern Marriage" with Robert Clarke, Margaret Field and Reed Hadley

(Monogram, no rel. date set; time, 66 min.)

From the viewpoint of emotional entertainment, "A Modern Marriage" is a top picture, and even though the principal players are not known the picture will undoubtedly prove to be a "sleeper." Exhibitors who will get behind the picture with a good exploitation campaign should enjoy profits such as some top pictures bring in to them. The theme is of interest to many young married couples, whose marriages are frequently destroyed by interfering mothers-in-law. Robert Clarke is, not only personally appealing, but also a good actor. Equally good is Margaret Field. As to Nana Bryant, she is realistic as the mother who is trying to keep her daughter to herself rather than see her happily married. She is subtle. Reed Hadley, as a doctor and marital relations counsellor, is very competent. Director Paul Landres, producer David Diamond and associate producer William F. Broidy should be congratulated for the excellence of the production:—

Directly after her marriage to Clarke, Margaret flees from their hotel room, rushes home to her mother (Miss Bryant), and attempts suicide by swallowing a large number of sleep-

ing pills. Clarke rushes her to a hospital in time to save her life, but from then on she refuses to see him. Hadley, a doctor with the Institute of Family Relations, is called into the case, and he sets out to bring about a readjustment so as to save the marriage. Through a series of talks with Clarke, Margaret and her mother, Hadley learns that Margaret and Clarke had fallen in love shortly after her college graduation. She had met his parents and they had given her a warm reception, but her mother had been cool towards him, and had deliberately though subtly tried to prevent her from going out with him. She had rebelled against her mother's tactics and had married Clarke, but on the wedding night she had rushed home out of fear that her mother might die of heart trouble. After a psychological diagnosis of the case, Hadley finds that the fault lies with the mother. She had divorced her husband years previously, and one night she had awakened in time to prevent him from taking Margaret away. Since then, she feared that she would lose her daughter and would remain alone. By convincing Margaret that her mother's health was perfect, Hadley induces her to return to Clarke.

Sam Roeca and George Wallace Sayre wrote the screen play. Suitable for the entire family.

"One Way Street" with James Mason, Marta Toren and Dan Duryea

(Univ.-Int'l, April; time, 79 min.)

Most movie-goers will find this melodrama only mildly interesting. The plot is synthetic and the characterizations unconvincing and somewhat confused. It starts off in exciting fashion, with an embittered doctor in the employ of gangsters outsmarting the gang by stealing their ill-gotten money and making off with the gang leader's girl-friend. But when the action shifts to a rural village in Mexico, where the fleeing couple take refuge, and where the ailing villagers' appreciation of the doctor's medical knowledge give him a new lease on life, the pace becomes slow and the proceedings tedious. The suspense that is generated in the early reels is not sustained. It is not a cheerful entertainment, and morally and ethically its values are questionable, for it tries to win sympathy for a couple whose actions are illicit. The fatalistic ending, where the doctor is killed accidentally, is disappointing:—

As Dan Duryea, a gang leader, prepares to divide the loot of a \$200,000 bank robbery with members of his gang, Marta Toren, his girl-friend, is told to summon James Mason, the gang's doctor, to treat William Conrad, who had been wounded. Mason gives Duryea a headache pill as he bandages Conrad. He then picks up the bag with the stolen money, calmly informs Duryea that he had given him a lethal pill, and tells him that, unless he is permitted to leave unharmed, he will not notify him within the hour of the antidote. Marta announces that she is going with Mason. Duryea, helpless, lets them escape, swearing revenge. They charter a plane to take them to Mexico City, but a faulty fuel pump causes them to make a forced landing near an isolated village. While the pilot sets off over the mountain for a new pump, Marta and Mason are befriended by a local priest (Basil Ruysdael), who gives them shelter in the village. During the week that the pilot is gone they live an idyllic existence. The priest, explaining that there is no doctor for miles around, prods Mason into treating the sick natives. Through this work, Mason, a fatalist, finds a real purpose in life for the first time, and he agrees to remain in the village, where he and Marta can live a happy and secure life. Shortly thereafter they learn that Duryea had picked up their trail. Mason decides to return to Los Angeles, give the money back to Duryea and, if he survives, to return with Marta to the little village. As Mason arrives at Duryea's apartment, Conrad kills Duryea and then turns his gun on him. But Mason, quicker on the draw, kills Conrad. He rushes downstairs to rejoin Marta and head back for Mexico. As he crosses the street, he is struck down and killed by a speeding car.

It was produced by Leonard Goldstein and directed by Hugo Fregonese from a story and screen play by Lawrence Kimble. Adult fare.

year. This is merely a beginning. During the next year, conservative estimates indicate that set ownership will be doubled. . . ."

Sam Goldwyn's entire article has the tendency of placing the motion picture industry on the defensive, insofar as the public is concerned, and of making the public look upon picture entertainment as the loser to television—having surrendered to it.

Goldwyn's article in the *Saturday Review of Literature* was, as said, admirably effective. But that article reached a very small number of people, the intelligentsia, and the good that it may have done is extremely limited. Had the *Review* article appeared in the *Times* magazine section, and the *Times* article in the motion picture industry's mediums, there would have been a different tale to tell. We could then hold Mr. Goldwyn as a constructive factor. Unfortunately, he did not seem to realize the harm he was doing to the industry by telling the public that the motion picture industry is up against it. The fine work being done by exhibitors everywhere to instill the public with the feeling that movies are better than ever is nullified by so thoughtless an article as Goldwyn's "Television's Challenge to the Movies," written for public consumption.

In the *Times* magazine article Mr. Goldwyn suggests several remedies, but the best remedy he could suggest is pictures that offer overwhelming entertainment. In this, HARRISON'S REPORTS agrees with Mr. Goldwyn. Pictures such as, for example, "Annie Get Your Gun," "Twelve O'Clock High," "Sands of Iwo Jima," "Riding High," "Cinderella" and "All the King's Men" make the public forget television and draw them to the picture theatres. When I saw "Annie Get Your Gun" at the MGM studio in Hollywood, I said to myself: "With pictures such as this one the motion picture industry has nothing to fear from television." But what has Mr. Goldwyn done to attract picture patrons to the theatres? Nothing! Of the last five pictures he has produced, three—"Enchantment," "Roseanna McCoy" and "My Foolish Heart"—have been "dogs" at the box-office. The fourth, "Our Very Own," which is about to be released, probably will fare no better. And if "Edge of Doom," the fifth picture, which he has just completed, is of the caliber of the pictures just mentioned, Sam Goldwyn had better crawl into his shell and stop writing articles in the newspapers and magazines, leading people to believe that he is the only producer who knows how to make good pictures. Instead of writing articles and seeking headlines, Goldwyn should buckle down to the business of making better pictures, the type that will draw people away from their television sets and send them flocking to the theatres.

HOW SOME HOLLYWOOD EXECUTIVES FEEL ABOUT TELEVISION — No. 3

Hollywood—Henry Ginsburg, Paramount vice-president in charge of studio productions and operations, has given me the following statement outlining his views on television and its effect on the motion picture industry:

"I, personally, do not believe that television, as it exists today, is contributing to any great extent in harming box-office receipts. I feel that as television develops it will prove an important adjunct and will ultimately become a part of the motion picture industry.

"If we would only come to the realization that we have reached a stage of normalcy and that proper adjustment to conditions must be made, then we will be able to overcome many of the problems confronting us. Many people in other industries, along with our own, have a happy faculty of seeking justification for their own shortcomings. I believe that the solution rests with us. As producers, our returns will be in ratio to the quality of our product. However, this cannot be left entirely to the product itself. The selling of pictures and their exhibition are just as important in the

scheme of things as their production.

"Nothing will be more helpful to all of us than a viewpoint which accepts intelligent, constructive and conscientious efforts as a part of that which makes for better business.

"Worry about the encroachment of television upon our business signifies an individual's fear, lack of courage and imagination. None of these characteristics have any place in show business, and that is still our business. If we accept that fact, which I believe our investments and responsibilities require that we do, we will find ways and means by which our pictures can be made better, sold better, exhibited better, and while we are all doing this intelligently we will also find the ways and means by which television can be mutually advantageous in the future development of our industry."

ALLIED LEADERS — PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

I have received the following telegram from Trueman Rembusch, president of Allied States Association:

"ALLIED GROWING BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS STOP TWENTY FIRST UNIT LAUNCHES WITH TWIN BOY MEMBERS SEVEN POUNDS TEN AND SEVEN POUNDS NINE AND THREE QUARTERS STOP PROVING THAT SHOWMANSHIP PAYS OFF MOTHER AND BOYS SAY PICTURES ARE BETTER THAN EVER IN 1950 ALL FINE. REGARDS."

If every Allied leader should follow the fine example set by Trueman Rembusch and, if possible, improve on his accomplishment by fathering either triplets or quadruplets, the Allied organization will be overwhelmed with members.

HARRISON'S REPORTS congratulates Mr. and Mrs. Rembusch for the fine American example they have set.

"Everybody's Dancin' " with Spade Cooley (Lippert, March 31; time, 65 min.)

This may do for small towns on the lower half of a double bill. The story is slight, but what might make it acceptable is the fact that it has some comedy, although silly, music and variety acts. Additionally, it is helped by brief guest appearances by Adele Jergens, Roddy McDowall, James Ellison and Russ Hayden. Entertaining specialty numbers are offered by Sons of the Pioneers, Chuy Reyes and his Orchestra, The Flying Taylors, The Great Velardi, The Medians and, of course, Spade Cooley, whose "Western Varieties" television show is very popular on the west coast:—

Having operated the Waltzland Ballroom on a Santa Monica pier ever since her husband (James Millican) died fifteen years previously, Barbara Woodel prepares to close it down because of poor business. Richard Lane, a phoney southern colonel, goes to her and boasts that he will finance the dance hall, even though he doesn't know where the next meal will come from. He felt that he could make it into a paying proposition if he could hire Spade Cooley and his band. Lane approaches Cooley and, by pretending that he is a wealthy man and able to televise Cooley's performance, obtains his promise to appear at the ballroom. Lane then succeeds in selling the idea to the owner of a television station. Cooley sees through Lane's schemings, but when he learns that Lane's motive was to save the dance hall owned by his old friend, Barbara, he decides to go through with the deal. After many manipulations, Lane finally stages the show, but during the performance he is besieged by creditors demanding payment of their bills. He manages to lock them in a soundproof room to prevent them from stopping the show. The performance is a success and, with the money collected, Lane satisfies the creditors and saves the dance hall.

It was produced by Bob Nunes and directed by Will Jason, from an original story by Mr. Nunes and Spade Cooley, and a screen play by Dorothy Raisson.

Harmless for the family trade.

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HOW SOME INDUSTRY EXECUTIVES FEEL ABOUT TELEVISION — No. 4

In response to my request for their views on television and its effect on the motion picture industry, statements have been sent to me by Spyros P. Skouras, president of Twentieth Century-Fox, and Trueman T. Rembusch, president of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors. As two of the foremost industry leaders, their views should help considerably to enlighten and guide all exhibitors to whom this all-important subject is a matter of deep concern.

The following statement is by Mr. Skouras:

"Over the years, I have watched the development of television. I followed with particular interest the development of large-screen television, for in this I saw—and see today—the means by which this so-called threat will be converted to the greatest stimulant our industry has had since the advent of sound.

"As I stated at the Chicago Showmanship meeting, when theatres are interconnected, theatre television will create the largest attendance show business has ever known. By virtue of many theatres playing the same attraction simultaneously, the income from this vast patronage will enable theatres to buy and present the finest talent of our times. Television in theatres will bring the greatest artists to every town and village in the United States. The smallest theatre in Missoula or El Centro will be able, through television, to exhibit shows thought possible only in a great metropolitan theatrical center and the basic presentation will, of course, be the feature picture with the televised show as the added attraction.

"With the granting of channels for the exclusive use of theatres, there would be four or five interconnected theatre networks of from 400 to 1000 theatres in the eastern states serviced by New York, and similar arrangements in Chicago, Denver, Dallas and Los Angeles. The humblest theatre in the smallest community will be able to deliver not only great motion pictures, but great live shows hitherto unavailable to these communities.

"When theatre television gets under way with the granting of channels, the necessary equipment will, of course, be produced on a mass basis and be delivered, I am confident, at a reasonable price and within a theatre's reach as conventional projection equipment is today.

"I believe most earnestly that the way to meet the present situation is by a powerful fight to secure exclusive channels for theatre use. Every theatre and every theatre group must work vigorously toward this end. The movie theatre is such a natural and logical location for a television presentation that I feel sure the public will welcome such a variation in our presentation of entertainment and the government will deem it of sufficient public interest and benefit and assign channels for this purpose.

"All exhibitors should be conscious of the importance of organizing themselves to advocate the allocation of channels for large-screen theatre use, either directly to the FCC or through their Congressional representatives. They must not be complacent about the urgency of securing channels for motion picture theatre use, nor take it for granted.

"It is expected, naturally, that even when the channels are granted, it will take two or more years before equipment is installed in theatres and the whole system is in full operation. In the interim, the exhibitor must devote himself with every human effort possible to the basic elements of showmanship. He must go out and reach his patrons on a grass-root level; he must ring doorbells; he must sell his product as he has never sold it before in order to sustain himself and his theatre during this crucial period. Through our showmanship meetings in Chicago and all the other exchange centers, we have attempted to show the way to over 8,000 theatre owners and managers who attended these meetings. If the exhibitors re-dedicate themselves to the principles of aggressive showmanship they will overcome the situation as they always have.

"Always keep foremost in mind that motion pictures have not only reached the highest artistic and technical development of any entertainment medium, but the people love them and want them above all else. We, at Twentieth Century-Fox, are dedicating ourselves to provide the exhibitor with the greatest number and the finest type of pictures that we are capable of producing and that will keep the motion picture theatre in the forefront of America's entertainment, where we intend to keep it."

Here is the statement by Mr. Rembusch:

"My impression of the whole television bugaboo is that the industry is making a great to-do about nothing. Sure it has made itself felt in some metropolitan areas but country-wide, no.

"Do you realize that today 20% of the United States does not have adequate AM broadcast coverage? That due to the limitations of the radio spectrum now used for television broadcasting, the development of even 40% coverage of the United States by TV is an impossibility? That when the Commission, as it must do, moves the TV art from V.H.F. to U.H.F. coverage will be further restricted? That Phonevision is tied to the same coverage as TV and that Phonevision's development is a pipe dream for any organization such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Parent-Teacher Clubs, yes, and even school auditoriums when equipped with Phonevision could, for the total price of \$1.00, play to an unlimited audience; making the average admission anywhere from two cents per person to as low as one-tenth of one cent per person? No producer is going off the nut selling his pictures at admission prices of the afore-mentioned size, much less make a profit.

"Allied States Association has been working with the problem for some time and we know we have the answers to a great many of the TV jitters. In the meantime, I for one am not going to play any producer's pictures that is so traitorous to the motion picture industry as to sell his productions, new or old, to television or to Phonevision. I imagine that a great many exhibitors feel as I do.

"I suggest that if any producer wants to produce for television or Phonevision, he take leave of the motion picture industry and sample the box-office of TV. I think if he does that he will come crawling back to the motion picture industry's box-office. There are some producers that have already produced pictures for TV use alone. Ask them if they sold their pictures profitably. I know of one who was stuck with his productions.

(Continued on next page)

"A Ticket to Tomahawk" with Anne Baxter and Dan Dailey

(20th Century-Fox, May; time, 90 min.)

Here is a highly enjoyable big-scale western in Technicolor, different enough to satisfy not only the action fans but also those who ordinarily do not go out of their way to see pictures of this type. The story has all the standard ingredients of the usual western plot, but what makes it different is the clever treatment, which ranges from burlesque to satire without affecting the melodramatic thrills, of which there are plenty. Dan Dailey, as a traveling salesman who becomes involved with villainous stagecoach operators trying to prevent a new railroad from establishing its franchise, and Anne Baxter, as a sure-shot deputy sheriff protecting the railroad, get the most out of their amusing characterizations and keep the audience chuckling throughout. Walter Brennan, as the train engineer, turns in his usual good performance. The production values are lavish and the color photography exceptionally good. The action takes place in the 1880's:—

Dailey, the only passenger on a Tomahawk and Western train making its initial run, becomes innocently involved with two desperadoes hired by Mauritz Hugo, a stagecoach operator, who was determined to keep the train from reaching Tomahawk within a stipulated time in order that its franchise be forfeited. Making his way to the town of Epitaph to report an unsuccessful attempt to wreck the train, Dailey is taken for a bad man by Anne Baxter, the sheriff's granddaughter, who orders him to get out of town by sundown. Meanwhile the train reached Epitaph, and Walter Brennan, the engineer, discovers that there is no track for the next forty miles, to a point several miles from Tomahawk, the terminal. Deputized by her grandfather as a U. S. Marshal, Anne organizes a 20-mule-team wagon train to haul the engine and other equipment over the trackless right-of-way. When it is learned that the franchise required that a paying passenger be carried, Dailey is compelled to go along. Rory Calhoun, secretly in league with Hugo, attaches himself to the mule train as an outrider. Calhoun's machinations, coupled with Indian attacks incited by Hugo, keep the mule train in plenty of hot water, but Dailey saves the situation when he learns that the Indian chief is an old friend, with whom he had once appeared in a wild west show. He wins the cooperation of the Indians, and they help to bring the railroad engine to its destination, where it is re-assembled and put on the track leading to Tomahawk. By this time Anne discovers the truth about Calhoun. To save himself, Calhoun leaps aboard the steaming engine and takes off. Anne and Dailey give chase, board the engine and, after a desperate fight, toss Calhoun from the engine to his death. Meanwhile bullet holes cause the water to run out of the engine's boiler, and it comes to a stop just outside of the town line of Tomahawk. With but a few minutes to make good the franchise, Dailey induces the mayor to extend the town line to the rear end of the engine. He also induces Anne to become his bride.

It was produced by Robert Bassler and directed by Richard Sale, who wrote the original screen play with Mary Loos. Fine for the family.

"Harbor of Missing Men" with Richard Denning and Barbra Fuller

(Republic, March 26; time, 60 min.)

This measures up as a pretty good melodrama for the action trade. Based on a crook-regeneration theme, the story is rather far-fetched and somewhat wildly melodramatic, but it unfolds with sufficient speed, excitement and intrigue to hold one's attention throughout. There is considerable suspense because of the constant danger to the hero, falsely suspected of a double-cross by the head of the smuggling ring. There is human interest in the manner in which the hero is befriended by a Greek fisherman and his family. A good part of the action takes place at sea. The sponge-fishing sequences are highly interesting. The direction and acting are good, and the photography sharp and clear:—

Richard Denning, a fishing boat owner, works a profit-

able diamond smuggling racket between Cuba and Key West. His activities become known to George Zucco, an unscrupulous business man, who blackmails him into agreeing to deliver to the captain of a foreign ship a boatload of contraband firearms, for which he was to collect \$30,000 in cash and keep \$2,000. Barbra Fuller, Zucco's secretary, and Ray Teal, her brother, manage to get aboard Denning's boat and hijack the money from him. Denning escapes from them by jumping into the sea, miles from the mainland, and he is left by them to drown. They beach his ship, making it appear as if he had absconded with the money. Meanwhile Denning is picked up by a sponge-fishing boat owned by Steven Geray, a Greek fisherman from Tarpon Springs, who gives him sanctuary in his home. He is trailed to Tarpon Springs by two of Zucco's henchmen, and barely escapes being shot to death by them. In due time Denning falls in love with Aline Towne, Geray's daughter, and he determines to conclude his nefarious business affairs and settle matters with Zucco who, because of Barbra's clever manipulations, still believed that he had stolen the money. He borrows Geray's boat, sails to Key West and, after getting both Zucco and Barbra aboard the craft, compels her to admit that she and her brother, Ray, had hijacked the money. Ray, hiding aboard the ship, suddenly appears with a gun in his hand. In the ensuing fight both Ray and Zucco are killed, while Barbra is subdued by Denning. With Aline promising to wait for him, Denning prepares to pay his debt to society.

It was produced by Sidney Picker and directed by R. G. Springsteen from a screen play by John K. Butler.

Suitable for the family.

"Customs Agent" with William Eythe and Marjorie Reynolds

(Columbia, May 18; time, 72 min.)

A fair program melodrama. The story is the moss-covered one about an undercover government agent who becomes a member of a dope-smuggling ring to unmask the clever leader. There is little about its presentation that is novel, and parts of it are a bit too talky, but on the whole it contains enough melodramatic ingredients to pass muster with the indiscriminating action fans. The direction is adequate and, although there is nothing outstanding about the acting, the players go through their chores in acceptable fashion. It should serve its purpose as the lower half of a double bill:—

William Eythe, a U. S. Customs agent, is given the chore of becoming a member of a gang of American smugglers who had been flooding the Chinese market with watered streptomycin, and of learning the identity of their secret leader. He is "dismissed" from the service for "negligence of duty" and, by going on a deliberate drunken spree, pretends to go to pot. Before long Howard S. John, one of the gang's ringleaders, approaches Eythe with a proposition to join the gang. He accepts after proper hesitation. Griff Barnett, an American business man in Shanghai who knew Eythe's father, urges Eythe to give up his connection with St. John, but Eythe refuses. His first assignment is to transport a load of narcotics concealed in his luggage back to the United States. During the trip he meets Marjorie Reynolds, another member of the gang. Aware that both Marjorie and St. John were putting him through a test, Eythe, with the cooperation of his Customs colleagues, smuggles the narcotics into the United States and then goes into hiding to give the gang the impression that he was trying to keep the profits from the narcotics for himself. This move convinces the secret leader, who turns out to be none other than Barnett, that Eythe had made a clean break with the law. He hunts down Eythe and offers him a special smuggling deal in return for one third of the profits. Eythe accepts the proposition and immediately informs the Customs Bureau of the plan. The officials are then enabled to close in on the gang and capture them.

It was produced by Rudolph C. Flothow and directed by Seymour Friedman from a screen play by Russell S. Hughes and Malcolm S. Boylan, based on a story by Hal Smith.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Operation Haylift" with Bill Williams, Ann Rutherford and Tom Brown

(Lippert, April 28; time, 73 min.)

This picture should prove a "natural" for small towns, despite its defects. One of the defects is the fact that it takes almost one-half hour before the main action is reached. Consequently, the action impresses one as being dull. There was a chance for preparation work in that part of the action, by planting forebodings as to the coming freeze. There should also have been shown, before the Operation Haylift was undertaken, scenes of suffering cattle as well as of people. The impact on one's emotions, then, would have been powerful. In view of the fact that the freeze a year ago this winter, as well as the Government's action in sending planes with hay, medical supplies and food to relieve the farmers, made the front pages of every newspaper in the country, the exhibitor who will book the picture has a chance to do effective exploitation. Bill Berke's direction is good, considering the limitations of the script. The actual shots of the Army planes' operations have been blended skillfully with the new scenes. There is considerable human interest contributed by Tommy Ivo, a fine little actor. Raymond Hatton, too, is sympathetic as the old farmer:—

Bill Williams, an Ely, Nevada, rancher, Ann Rutherford, his wife, and Tommy Ivo, their ten-year-old son, welcome back Tom Brown, Bill's brother, from service with the air force. Bill wanted Tom to return to ranching, and planned to buy additional acreage for them to operate. To make sure that Tom will remain as his partner, Bill sends for Jane Nigh, Tom's girl-friend, whom Tom marries. Just before starting on his honeymoon, Tom meets Richard Travis, an Air Force buddy, and his old love for the service is re-awakened. He gives up ranching to re-enlist, leaving Bill angry at being left in the lurch. A terrific blizzard engulfs the Rocky Mountain area, isolating cattle on the range away from any feed. As the cattle and sheep begin freezing, Joe Sawyer, head of the livestock association, appeals to the Government for aid. Within twenty-four hours giant C-82's (Flying Boxcars) arrive in Ely and load up with hay, which they drop in the center of the blizzard-bound herds. Among the pilots is Tom, but Bill, still antagonistic, refuses to ask for help. Bill's son, noticing his father's stubbornness, tries to go for aid himself and is injured in the attempt. Bill brings the boy back home and, now repentant, saddles a horse and goes to the center of activities for aid. His ranch poses a problem to the aviators because it is located in difficult terrain, but Tom offers to attempt a flight. Bill joins him in the effort, and together they drop the hay within a few feet of the cattle, saving them. Now reunited with Tom, Bill becomes a staunch friend of the Air Force.

Joe Sawyer produced it and wrote the original screen play in collaboration with Dean Reisner.

Good for the family.

"Captive Girl" with Johnny Weissmuller and Buster Crabbe

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 74 min.)

Fair. It is on the same order as the last three pictures of the "Jungle Jim" series, only that this time much better care has been given to the selection of the animal stock shots, and the photography shows considerable improvement. There are several exciting situations, particularly in the closing scenes, where hundreds of monkeys and other animals shriek wildly as they help Weissmuller and his party attack and eventually exterminate the villains. Weissmuller, who is keeping his weight down, is as good as he was in the other pictures. The picture should prove a "natural" for children.

Johnny Weissmuller is requested by Nelson Leigh, a jungle missionary, and Rick Vallin, young chieftain of the Village of Bonkonjis, to track down Anita Lhoest, a leopard woman, who, with a panther for a pet, had been attacking the tribe's witchmen but was leaving the villagers unmolested. She was particularly bitter against John Dehner, the chief medicine man. Leigh informs Johnny that, years previously, a married couple, archaeologists, had disappeared along with their little daughter during an expedition in search of the Lagoon of the Dead. He expresses his suspicion that Dehner had killed the archaeologists, and that their daughter had escaped and had become the leopard

woman. Searching for Anita, Johnny and Vallin come upon evidence proving conclusively that Dehner had killed her parents by throwing them into the Lagoon. Johnny and Vallin head for the Lagoon, where they discover a gang of adventurers, headed by Buster Crabbe, diving for a fortune in gold that had been thrown into the Lagoon by Dehner along with the archaeologists. They eventually catch up with Anita, saving her life when she is caught in a bog, and convince her that they are her friends. All three are waylaid and captured by Dehner and his witchmen. Johnny escapes, but Vallin and Anita are dragged to the Lagoon to be drowned. Aided by the villagers, Johnny saves the captives, and in the ensuing fight Vallin kills Dehner, while Crabbe, in league with the witchmen, dies at the bottom of the lagoon. With Vallin's village now free of fear, Johnny makes arrangements to send Anita back to civilization.

It was produced by Sam Katzman and directed by William Berke from a screen play by Carroll Young, based on the newspaper feature, "Jungle Jim."

Harmless for the family trade.

"Sunset Boulevard" with Gloria Swanson, William Holden and Erich Von Stroheim

(Paramount, August; time, 110 min.)

"Sunset Boulevard" shapes up as a tragic but out-of-the-ordinary adult drama, revolving around an aging silent screen queen, her dreams of a comeback, and her affair with a young but penniless Hollywood screen writer. The action-minded fans, particularly in small towns, may find the picture too slow and repetitious, but others should find it fascinating because of the unusual story treatment, the Hollywood and studio backgrounds, and the behind-the-scenes insight on the making of movies. The acting is very good, but outstanding is the exceedingly fine performance of Gloria Swanson, who is as glamorous as ever. As the one-time screen star who lives in luxurious egocentric seclusion, she makes the most of the histrionic opportunities of her femme fatale role. The story has several dramatic highlights, notably at the finish where Miss Swanson, hopelessly insane after having murdered her young lover, descends a staircase while the newsreel cameras grind, believing that she is once again playing a scene in a great dramatic role. Another highly dramatic sequence is where she visits Cecil B. DeMille at the Paramount studios in the mistaken belief that he wanted to star her in his next picture. DeMille, learning that one of his aides merely wanted to rent her expensive foreign car as a prop, withholds the truth from her. As an actor, Mr. DeMille is most impressive. William Holden, as the writer who becomes Miss Swanson's kept darling, and Erich Von Stroheim, as her faithful butler and former husband who caters to her illusions of grandeur, are very effective. Because many film-goers, particularly the older ones, will want to see Miss Swanson's return to the screen, the picture, which Paramount plans to back up with an extensive exploitation campaign, may turn out to be an exceptional box-office grosser.

Told in one long flashback, the story has Holden, a disillusioned and broke screen writer, meeting Miss Swanson when he drives into the garage of her mansion while fleeing from two finance company men seeking to repossess his car. Miss Swanson, an egomaniac, mistakes him for the man she had called to bury her dead pet chimpanzee. When she learns that he is a writer, she shows him a script of "Salome," written by herself, and he, with his depleted finances in mind, suggests that she have a professional writer whip the story into shape. She hires him on the spot and insists that he live at her home. She pampers him and buys him expensive clothes, and before long he becomes her lover. A meeting with Cecil B. DeMille leaves her with the mistaken notion that he will produce her story with her in the lead, and she immediately goes on a rigid diet-and-beauty treatment schedule to prepare for her return to the screen. Holden, tiring of her idiosyncracies, slips out nights to meet Nancy Olson, a reader at the Paramount studio, with whom he falls in love. Miss Swanson, learning of their meetings, informs Nancy of his mode of living. This leads to a split between him and Nancy, and Holden, disgusted, decides to leave Miss Swanson, despite her pleas that he remain. Emotionally distraught, she shoots him dead as he leaves the house. The police arrive and find her hopelessly insane.

It was produced by Charles Brackett and directed by Billy Wilder from a screen play written by D. M. Marshman, Jr., in collaboration with Messrs Wilder and Brackett. Strictly adult fare.

"One exhibitor operating in a metropolitan area, that I talked to, told me that on Tuesday night his business was stinko because of the Milton Berle show. During the conversation he said, 'Funny thing though last Tuesday night business was good.' I inquired as to what he was playing and it developed that he had on his screen a good 'Want to See' picture. Going back over his Tuesday night bookings and grosses, I found that where he was playing pictures of low box-office appeal his box-office was low. When he had a good one, the box-office was good.

"No, Pete, I can't get exercised about TV. I believe that our industry has a great future. I believe that once the producers stop making pictures for the country club crowd, the critics and academy awards, only keeping in mind what the public wants to see, most of the industry problems will blow away. If you could have seen the crowds in Indianapolis flocking to see CINDERELLA and MA AND PA KETTLE, I know you would agree with my thinking as to television blues."

MORE ON PENALIZING THE EXHIBITOR FOR HIS SHOWMANSHIP WORK

According to a news item in the April 17 issue of *Motion Picture Daily*, William K. Jenkins, president of the Georgia Theatre Company, in Atlanta, is reported as saying that responsibility for better showmanship does not rest entirely in the hands of the exhibitors but needs to be shared equally with them by the distributors.

The distributors, said Mr. Jenkins, must provide the exhibitor with some incentive for giving his "blood, sweat and tears" to the cause of higher grosses, and he charged that, in reality, many distributors seek to penalize the exhibitor who gets "super-normal" business results.

Mr. Jenkins backed up his charge by citing, as an example, an arrangement that had been proposed recently by one distributor whereby 82½ per cent of a \$50 increase in the gross would go to the distributor, leaving the theatre only \$8.75, although it might have spent \$10 in extra advertising to obtain the \$50 increase in the gross.

If such an arrangement were agreed to, said Mr. Jenkins, it certainly would destroy all incentive on the part of the exhibitor to go after higher grosses.

Mr. Jenkins' complaint that the exhibitor has no incentive to boost the gross on a percentage picture through more intensive showmanship efforts agrees with what Colonel H. A. Cole, the Allied leader from Texas, had to say at the recent 20th Century-Fox Showmanship meeting in Dallas, and which was the subject of editorial comment in these columns last week.

As pointed out in last week's editorial, the present sliding scale percentage plan is illogical, for under it the exhibitor finds himself penalized for whatever extra efforts he puts behind the exploitation of a picture. How, then, can he be blamed for refusing to put on a vigorous selling campaign?

The current movement to rekindle the spark of showmanship and to stimulate an aggressive attitude in the exploitation of pictures to the public is, indeed, not only commendable but something the industry is badly in need of. But the distributors, if they are to win the complete and whole-hearted cooperation of the exhibitor for more and better showmanship, must provide him with an incentive. Whether it be a sliding scale plan in reverse, as suggested by Mike Vogel and outlined in this paper's previous issue, or a big-scale return to flat rentals on a live-and-let-live basis, the distributors must come forth with a new sales system, one that will give the exhibitor an opportunity to earn a fair share of the extra profits that may result from his willingness to roll up his sleeves and get more dollars into the box-office.

Given such an incentive, the exhibitor would get behind the pictures he books with all the ingenuity at his command, and in all probability his efforts will result in greater financial benefits, not only for himself, but the producers and distributors, too.

ANOTHER BOOST FOR VIDEO COMPETITION

Weekly *Variety* reports in its April 19 issue that RKO-Pathe, which is the subsidiary producing company that makes short subjects for RKO, has switched to a new technique in the making of shorts, "with an eye on the television market."

According to this report, the company is now turning out all its shorts with two sound tracks, one being the standard type that incorporates both musical background and dialogue, while the other retains the dialogue but omits the music.

This new technique, continues the report, will permit RKO to market its shorts on television, despite the long-standing ban against use of sound track music on television imposed by James C. Petrillo, powerful head of the American Federation of Musicians.

Shooting its short subjects with two sound tracks so that the one without music may be shown on television is indeed economical, and RKO, as well as other companies that may adopt this technique, will no doubt find a ready market, for the television medium is badly in need of decent film fare.

But, as this paper has pointed out on previous occasions, the production of the same picture for showing on competitive mediums of entertainment, not only tends to decrease its value to the exhibitor, but poses a problem to him in that the television version may be telecast after he has licensed the theatre version but before he has had a chance to exhibit it.

This move by RKO once again points up the need for an exhibitor to protect himself by demanding that all distributors with whom he deals include in their license agreements, whether for shorts or for features, a clause warranting that the film licensed has not and will not be shown on television for a specific period of time following its exhibition in his theatre. The film salesmen will, of course, assure the exhibitor that he has nothing to worry about. Business prudence, however, requires that such assurances be written into the agreement.

"Mystery at the Burlesque" with an all-English cast

(Monogram, April 16; time, 59 min.)

Produced in England, this is a fair program murder mystery melodrama, with music. The action takes place in a burlesque theatre, in London, and the story has its intolérant detective inspector and dull-witted sergeant, just as is the case in many American pictures of this kind. There is nothing exciting about the way the inspector goes about solving the murder. There is considerable leg display, and the songs may please American picture-goers. The photography is fine:—

At the end of an evening performance in a London burlesque theatre, a man, identified as a traveller for a makeup firm, is found in the front row dead, shot through the heart. Jack Livesey, owner of the theatre, holds the entire cast in the house until the authorities make an investigation. Garry Marsh, detective inspector, and Jon Pertwee, sergeant, arrive and begin the investigation. To obtain a clue to the murderer, the inspector orders the cast to perform the last part of the show, and the piecing together of the several clues points to Donald Clive, the leading man, as the murderer. Clive is about to be arrested when Diana Decker, the leading lady, explodes all the police theories by coming up with proof of Clive's innocence. Suddenly a shot is heard and Elliot Makehem, the property man, is found backstage; he had tried to take his own life but had not succeeded. He confesses to the murder, giving as his reason his grudge against the dead man for the way he had been treating the girls in the theatrical company. Since the investigation had taken all night and part of the following day, the company prepares for the opening number of the show's first performance that day.

It was produced by Daniel M. Angel and directed by Val Guest from his own screen play.

Harmless for the family trade.

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A SOUND RECOMMENDATION

At a luncheon meeting held this week with members of the trade press, William F. Rodgers, MGM's vice-president in charge of distribution, warned that the industry, as big and as strong as it is, cannot stand up much longer under the wave of anti-trust suits brought against the distributors by the exhibitors. Stating that the industry has just about reached "Custer's last stand," Rodgers asserted that, unless a solution is found soon, the industry as a whole is headed for trouble because, with the producer-distributors diverting their time and money to defend these trust actions, product is bound to suffer along with everything else.

Mr. Rodgers voiced the opinion that a solution to this problem may be found in a new system of arbitration, developed and backed by the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, and he declared that, at the forthcoming May 8 meeting of COMPO, in Chicago, he will personally press for the adoption of such an arbitration system, in spite of the fact that the proposed organizational setup excludes trade practices.

Bill Rodgers has put the spotlight on a problem that is a cause of considerable concern, not only among the producer-distributors, but also among many exhibitors who see in the substantial money judgments being levied against the producer-distributors a definite threat to the very existence of the industry in its entirety.

In Rodgers' opinion, with which this paper concurs, most exhibitors would rather submit controversies over clearance and availability to arbitration than rush to the courts with a suit for damages. Such litigation is not only time-consuming but usually costly for both sides.

HARRISON'S REPORTS sincerely hopes that the delegates of the component groups that make up COMPO will go to the Chicago meeting with an open mind on the feasibility of including trade practices within the organization's functions, and that deep consideration will be given to Rodgers' recommendation. The industry cannot afford to be torn by internal dissension, particularly in these trying times, and with all branches working hand in hand, and with the good will on the part of every one concerned continued, it is possible to develop within COMPO a trade practice program that will solve many of the problems that divide the producer-distributors and the exhibitors.

HOW SOME INDUSTRY EXECUTIVES FEEL ABOUT TELEVISION — No. 5

Continuing the series of articles presenting the viewpoints of top industry leaders on television and its effect on the motion picture industry, I am pleased to publish this week statements by Samuel Pinanski, president of Theatre Owners of America, and William J. Heineman, Eagle-Lion's vice-president in charge of distribution.

Mr. Pinanski's statement follows:

"The famous statement of the late President Roosevelt, 'We have nothing to fear but fear itself,' keeps repeatedly coming to my mind in any discussion of our industry's present-day economic situation.

"There are a number of contributory factors to the box-office ills with which we are currently beset—general economic conditions; competition we get from other forms of amusement competing for the same amusement dollar; and television. All these are but a few of the factors playing formidable roles in our declining business.

"I see, however, no problem here that cannot be thoroughly defeated by good showmen. I think many of us have too long been confusing the necessity for thinking with the

poisoning process of worrying, and while we have been worrying we have been neglecting the traditions of show business.

"Now I suddenly see a new spirit of showmanship taking hold. Showmen everywhere are on the march, recapturing their lost enthusiasm, revitalizing our industry, and making the motion picture theatres again the focal point of all community activities.

"Television cannot be blamed for all our ills. It is interesting to note that in many areas where it has not yet penetrated, business is off in just the same degree as in others where a steady video diet is offered.

"Furthermore, television programs of present-day standing cannot long satisfy the public. The air is saturated with the variety type show—the very show that we offered in years gone by in our theatres, and the same show that we can still offer much more attractively on our screens if the film companies will produce them for us.

"It is my hope that producers will soon make available for the exhibitor a variety type show that we can advertise extensively to compete with the medium of television, and I feel sure that such entertainment will help us recapture much of our lost audience.

"From the foregoing you can see that I agree with you that the fears of the exhibitors are largely unjustified. And I further agree with you that a combination of honest thinking and intelligent showmanship will soon see our industry emerge from today's lethargy stronger and sounder than ever.

The following statement is by Mr. Heineman:

"These days it seems to be fashionable to sound pessimistic—especially on the subject of television. I'm sorry that I can't go along with the crowd; I can't feel too pessimistic over this new medium of entertainment or the threat it supposedly poses to our industry.

"I cannot help feeling that television will never replace the motion picture theatre. People love a parade, and people love a crowd. The American public is gregarious; the American boy wants to 'take his girl to the show' on date night; and I do not believe that television can change this fundamental habit of the American people.

"Many exhibitors have grown panicky over the threat of television to their own box office potential. They forget that this condition—of threat from some new entertainment medium—is not new in our business. With the inception of radio, the same howl was raised by some exhibitors. They were convinced that radio meant the end of motion pictures as a major industry. However, time cured these howls. Radio and motion pictures found that they could both live together, and that, indeed, each could be of help to the other in building joint stars and shows.

"I am completely convinced that real entertainment, as our national psychology dictates it, calls for mass assembly. I saw the Bob Hope show on television Easter Sunday. It was a good show and I enjoyed it. However, I honestly believe that if the same show had been seen in a theatre, I would have enjoyed it much more and that everyone else would have, too. We know that comedy particularly has to have an audience to be properly appreciated; we know that the enjoyment of each member of the audience communicates itself to the others, so that there is a mutual heightening of the entertainment value of whatever is being seen.

"Let's look at the field of sports. For a while all the major sports promotions refused to permit their games or matches to be televised, for fear of hurting attendance. It took a long time for them to come around to being willing to

(Continued on back page)

"The Gunfighter" with Gregory Peck

(20th Century-Fox, June; time, 84 min.)

A very good, out-of-the-ordinary western melodrama. It is sure to satisfy, not only the western fans, but also those who usually shy away from this type of entertainment. Unlike most typical westerns, this one has a minimum of fast action, for it is more or less a character study of a notorious gunman, whose bloody career is referred to by dialogue. Nevertheless, it holds one taut with suspense from start to finish because of the fact that ambitious young hoodlums, eager to make a reputation for themselves, insist upon challenging his prowess by goading him into a fight. As the weary, lonely badman who seeks to become a law-abiding citizen, Gregory Peck turns in another one of his superior performances, winning considerable sympathy because of his sincere but unsuccessful efforts to live in quiet and peace with his wife and son. The direction is excellent, and the acting of the others in the cast highly competent:—

Fearful throughout the Southwest, Peck seeks to forget his sanguinary past, but he learns to his dismay that a reputation such as his is not easily cast aside, for, having been stamped as "top gun" in the West, he constantly encounters young toughs who, seeking to make a reputation for themselves, challenge his courage. While on his way to Cayenne to see his wife (Helen Westcott), from whom he had been separated more than eight years, Peck, stopping at a saloon, is baited by such a character. He tries his level best to ignore the youth but is finally compelled to kill him in self defense. As a result he finds himself pursued by three of the youth's brothers, on whom he gains a three-hour lead by the time he pulls into Cayenne. There, his presence excites the entire town, and he discovers that the sheriff is Millard Mitchell, a former member of his gang, who had gone to the side of law and order. Mitchell advises him to get out of town immediately, but Peck insists that he first deliver to Helen, who was living in town with their son under an assumed name, a message that he wanted to see her to effect a reconciliation. In the few hours that he spends in town trying to arrange a meeting with Helen, Peck, doing his best to avoid trouble, wards off an attempt by a local citizen to kill him, and bluffs Skip Homeier, the town's tough kid, out of goading him into a fight. He finally meets with his wife and son, and she agrees to give him a year's time to reform his ways and adjust himself. By this time the pursuing brothers arrive in town. As Peck prepares to make a getaway, Homeier, lurking on the outside, shoots him down. Mitchell arrests Homeier, but Peck, before he dies, absolves the youth, thus dooming him to live out the rest of his life by killing others in order to keep from being killed himself.

It was produced by Nunnally Johnson and directed by Henry King from a screen play by William Bowers and William Sellers, based on a story by Andre de Toth and Mr. Bowers. The cast includes Jean Parker and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The Golden Gloves Story" with James Dunn

(Eagle-Lion, May; time, 76 min.)

Produced on a modest budget, this boxing melodrama is handicapped by a weak story, and by direction and acting that leaves much to be desired, but it should get by as a supporting feature in secondary situations, where audiences are not too discriminating. Unlike the title indicates, the story, rather than being a documentary account of the history of the famous Golden Gloves contests, uses that tournament as a background for a romantic triangle involving a referee's pretty daughter and two young boxers, one a decent well-to-do chap, and the other a brash, tough guy. There is considerable human interest in the fine relationship between the girl and her father, well played by James Dunn, but her falling in love and marrying the tough boxer, despite his deplorable conduct and doubtful ethics, lacks conviction. The parts of the story that deal with boxing stress the principles of fair play and sportsmanship, giving the film good social and ethical values for youngsters. The fight

sequences are fairly exciting. The picture offers good exploitation values because of the popularity of the Golden Gloves:—

Dunn, a widower and amateur boxing enthusiast, officiates each year as a referee in the Golden Gloves tournament in Chicago. Kay Westfall, his daughter, is engaged to Kevin O'Morrison, a wealthy young man who had entered the contest, but her love cools when she meets Dewey Martin, an arrogant young boxer, who sweeps her off her feet, despite Dunn's objections to him. Dunn referees a championship bout between O'Morrison and Martin, and gives the decision to O'Morrison on a technical knockout when Martin suffers a bad cut on the forehead. Believing that Dunn had disqualified him deliberately, Martin takes his revenge by inducing Kay to run away from home to marry him. But she returns on the following day after a quarrel with him. One year later the two young men are again matched for a championship bout, and Dunn is assigned as the referee. Concerned lest his feeling against Martin influence his judgment, Dunn asks to be replaced as referee. O'Morrison wins again, this time by a clean knockout. Realizing that his behavior had been abominable, Martin goes to Kay's home to apologize to her, to Dunn and to O'Morrison. Kay embraces him, and O'Morrison, aware that she still loved Martin, gracefully steps out of their lives while Dunn gives his approval to their marriage.

It was produced by Carl Krueger and directed by Felix Feist, who wrote the screen play with Joe Ansen, based on a story by D. D. Beauchamp and William F. Sellers.

Suitable for the family.

"Kill the Umpire" with William Bendix, Una Merkel and Ray Collins

(Columbia, May; time, 78 min.)

A good comedy. Even though the story is thin and the action wildly slapstick at times, it should go over well with most audiences because of the many amusing situations. William Bendix, as a rabid baseball fan who hates umpires, provokes hilarious laughter by some of his antics. The complications he gets himself into when, as a result of domestic difficulties, he becomes a professional umpire himself, are highly comical. The subject matter is timely in view of the opening of the baseball season, and it is worthy of strong selling methods to get the audiences into the theatre, for once in there is no doubt that they will be entertained:—

Bendix, a former ball player, is married to Una Merkel, daughter of Ray Collins, a retired umpire, and Gloria Henry, their daughter, is engaged to Richard Taylor, a big league pitcher. Unable to stay away from ball parks, where he heaps abuse on the umpires, Bendix loses job after job. Una threatens to leave him, but a break-up is averted when Collins, concluding that Bendix can't stay away from baseball, decides that he might as well make a living from the game by becoming an umpire. To pacify Una, Bendix agrees to go to an umpire school operated by William Frawley. He deliberately tries to flunk out, but he becomes converted and graduates. He is assigned to the Texas League, where the fans take their baseball seriously, and in his very first game declares a visiting team player safe at home although he had apparently been tagged out three feet from home plate. Unaware that the catcher had dropped the ball, the irate fans riot, slugging Bendix and knocking the catcher unconscious. Bendix declares the game forfeited to the visiting team, and manages to escape to his hotel. There, he becomes a virtual prisoner as hundreds of enraged baseball fans seek to tar and feather him. Determined to umpire the next game, Bendix manages to reach the ball park after a series of hair-raising encounters with the pursuing mob. With the crowd ready to tear Bendix limb from limb, the home team catcher saves the situation by announcing that Bendix's decision at home plate had been fair. The fans, reversing themselves, hail Bendix, but not for long, for his first decision against the home team is greeted with the cry of "Kill the Umpire!"

It was produced by John Beck and directed by Lloyd Bacon from an original screen play by Frank Tashlin.

Fine for the entire family.

"Sierra" with Wanda Hendrix, Audie Murphy and Burl Ives

(Univ.-Int'l, June; time, 83 min.)

Despite the fine outdoor Technicolor photography, this western shapes up as no more than mildly entertaining. The story is ordinary, the treatment routine, and the action, with the exception of the closing scenes, not particularly exciting. As a matter of fact, it has many dull moments. The performances of Audie Murphy, as the son of an outlaw, and Wanda Hendrix, as a female lawyer, lack conviction, but they can hardly be blamed in view of the weak story material. Burl Ives, as a prospector, renders several fairly entertaining songs. The closing scenes, which show a stampede of wild horses, are highly exciting, but even this does not give the film a sufficient lift:—

When her horse bolts from her in the mountains, Wanda stumbles upon the hideaway of Audie Murphy and his father, Dean Jagger; both had been holed up there for fifteen years, ever since Jagger had escaped, after being convicted of a murder on circumstantial evidence. They resent her intrusion and prepare to escort her back to town, but before they can leave Jagger suffers a serious injury in a fall from his horse, requiring medical aid. Audie sets out for town with Wanda, taking along a string of wild horses with which to pay the doctor. En route, Wanda is bitten by a rattlesnake, and Audie abandons the horses to rush her to the doctor in town. The horses are taken in tow by Richard Rober and his henchmen, who claim them on the ground that unbranded mavericks belong to the finder. Audie attempting to recover the horses, is captured and jailed for horse stealing. Wanda defends him at the trial, but, when it comes out that he is Jagger's son, he is sentenced to hang. Burl Ives, a prospector friend, helps Audie to escape. In the events that follow, Audie joins forces with another family of fugitives to help him round up a huge herd of wild horses he had discovered. Meanwhile the sheriff and several posses head for the mountains to track down Audie and his father. Wanda rides to warn him. One posse, headed by Rober, discovers Audie and his men just as they herd the wild horses into a narrow canyon. Rober and his men stampede the animals, but Audie and his men turn the herd, and the reverse stampede badly tramples Rober. Before he dies, however, he confesses to the murder for which Jagger had been convicted, and admits that the horse stealing charge against Audie was false. It all ends with Wanda and Audie riding off into the sunset.

It was produced by Michel Kraike and directed by Alfred E. Green from a screen play by Edna Anhalt, based on a novel by Stuart Hardy.

Harmless for the family.

"Military Academy" with Stanley Clements

(Columbia, April; time, 65 min.)

Poor. The story is not bad, but it has been directed with little skill. It reminds one of movie-making thirty years ago. The motivations are weak, and so is the acting—the players act in a most amateurish way. Towards the end there is some human interest, but not enough to save the picture. The picture was shot on the grounds of the Brown Military Academy, at San Diego, but it does not do credit to either the school or its faculty. The photography is good:—

John R. Hamilton, a judge, offers to finance the construction of a chapel wanted by William Johnstone, commandant of the Crown Military Academy, provided he accepts as students Stanley Clements, Myron Welton, Gene Collins and Leon Tyler, four of the toughest hoodlums who had ever appeared in his court. The judge hoped that they will be turned into useful citizens. Behaving like roughnecks, the boys upset the routine at the Academy and refuse to abide by the rules. James Millican, a kindly faculty member, believes that patience and good treatment will change the boys, but James Seay, another faculty member, opposes his efforts; he sought to discredit Millican so that he himself might become the commandant upon Johnstone's retirement.

Clement's father, just out of jail, visits his son at the Academy and recognizes Millican as a former East Side lawbreaker who had changed his name. He so informs Seay, who compels Millican to submit his resignation under threat of exposure. Millican, to set an example for the four boys, reveals his past to them and urges them to become useful citizens, like himself. He then informs them of his resignation. The boys, feeling an affection for Millican, decide to take action so as to induce him to stay. They try to steal his resignation from Johnstone's office, only to be caught. Millican, summoned, guesses what the boys had been up to. He demands the letter from them and hands it to Johnstone. After reading it, Johnstone informs Millican that he had known of his past, and that he will be the next commandant just the same. The boys, delighted, determine to reform for good.

It was produced by Wallace MacDonald, and directed by D. Ross Lederman, from a story by Howard J. Green.

Harmless for the family.

"The Secret Fury" with Claudette Colbert, Robert Ryan and Paul Kelly

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 86 min.)

A pretty good psychological mystery thriller. In spite of the fact that the story is far-fetched and the characters unrealistic, it generates considerable suspense because of the mystery and of the melodramatic complications revolving around the heroine's bewilderment when she is confronted with indisputable legal proof of her marriage, to a man she does not know. Worked into the plot are two murders and the temporary insanity of the heroine, brought about by her emotional upset. It is not a pleasant entertainment, but it holds one's interest throughout because of the fact that it keeps one guessing as to the identity of the person responsible for the heroine's dilemma. The closing scenes, where the guilty person attempts to murder the heroine, are highly exciting. The direction and acting are good, and the photography fine:—

Claudette Colbert, a noted pianist, and Robert Ryan, an architect, are getting married when Willard Parker, a stranger, stops the ceremony to say that she had married Dave Balfour a few weeks previously in the nearby town of Fairview. Claudette is bewildered by the accusation, but district attorney Paul Kelly, her former suitor, and Philip Ober, her guardian and her father's former law partner, establish that there is a record of such a marriage. Indignant, Claudette, accompanied by Ryan, Ober and Jane Cowl, her aunt, drives to Fairview to investigate, and becomes completely puzzled when the justice of the peace who performed the ceremony, the witnesses, and a hotel maid, all recognize her. Insisting that she does not know Balfour, Claudette, aided by Ryan, tracks down the man, a jazz musician, who greets her as his wife. He takes her into another room for a private talk, during which he is shot dead. Despite her protests that some unseen person had fired the shot, Claudette is indicted for the murder. Prosecuted by Kelly and defended by Ober, she becomes hysterical on the stand. Ober quickly changes her plea from not guilty to guilty by reason of insanity, and she is sent to an asylum. Unwilling to believe the evidence, Ryan starts an investigation of his own and discovers that Claudette's name on the marriage application had been forged, that the justice of the peace was a fake, and that the hotel maid had been paid to recognize Claudette. The maid is killed by Parker before she can reveal more. Ryan captures Parker, but he dies accidentally before Ryan can learn who is behind the fantastic plot. Meanwhile Claudette escapes from the asylum and discovers that Ober is her persecutor. He admits that he was seeking to avenge himself because her father had once committed him to an insane asylum. He then tries to kill Claudette, but she is saved by the timely arrival of Ryan, who fights off Ober just as a huge falling mirror crushes him to death.

It was produced by Jack H. Skirball and directed by Mel Ferrer from a screen play by Lionel Houser, based on a story by Jack R. Leonard and James O'Hanlon.

Adult fare.

permit television, but when they did, they found to their great surprise that attendance figures jumped to the highest totals ever! Instead of hurting the sports world, television had actually proved helpful through the added publicity it gave!

"So far as I'm concerned, television is not THE entertainment medium. When the novelty of this new medium wears off, as it is bound to do in time, television will settle down to being just another one of the media of entertainment, taking its place with films, legitimate shows, radio and sports events. I believe that television has its rightful place in this over-all entertainment picture, and when it attains this rightful place, we shall find that we have no more worries about the competition it offers than we have today about radio. I believe that as each individual medium of entertainment is strengthened and made more profitable, each of the others must inevitably become stronger and more profitable in turn."

RKO NOT PRODUCING SHORTS FOR TELEVISION MARKET

In last week's issue, under the heading, "Another Boost for Video Competition," this paper commented upon a story that appeared in April 19 issue of weekly *Variety*, which reported that RKO-Pathé, the subsidiary producing company making shorts for RKO Radio distribution, has switched to a new technique in producing shorts, "with an eye on the television market."

H. J. Michalson, president of RKO-Pathé and short subject sales manager for RKO Radio, writes to this paper that the report in *Variety* was "completely unfounded and untrue."

"RKO Pathé and RKO Radio are not producing shorts 'with an eye on the television market,' declares Mr. Michalson. "Both of these companies are producing and distributing outstanding short product with an eye single to the motion picture theatrical field, have always done so and will continue to do so. I personally believe that RKO has delivered to the motion picture theatres the finest of short subject entertainment in great variety and it is my earnest hope that future deliveries of short subjects to the motion picture theatres will be as signally successful."

As to *Variety's* report that the company is now turning out all its shorts with two sound tracks, one of which omits the musical background in order to make them marketable for television, Mr. Michalson adds: "There is a production practice, not exclusive to RKO alone but rather common in the industry, that you should be aware of. In the course of shooting the narrator's voice for the mixed sound track containing music and sound effects, that voice is separately recorded on the disc. The purpose of the disc recording is a protection device against damage in the laboratories during the course of developing and printing. These discs are regularly destroyed after they have served their insurance purpose. The practice, by the way, antedates the advent of sound."

HARRISON'S REPORTS is indeed glad to correct any erroneous impression its subscribers may have about RKO producing shorts for television as a result of last week's article, and it wishes to commend the company for the definite stand it has taken in confining its product to exhibition in motion picture theatres only. Such a stand recognizes that the sale of the same subject to a competitive medium like television serves to undermine the business of the exhibitors who, in the final analysis, make it possible for the producers to remain in business.

SAMUEL GOLDWYN PRODUCTIONS, INC.
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York 20, N. Y.

April 24, 1950

Mr. Pete Harrison
Harrison's Reports
New York, New York

Dear Pete:

You've built a fine reputation over many years as an editor beholden to no one and as one of the industry's most acute observers. That's why I was surprised to read in your April 15th issue your heated objection to my recent article in the New York Times Magazine, "Television's Challenge to the Movies".

I've always known you to be fair, Pete. That's why I'm sure you will allow me equal space for my reply. You ob-

jected that the article, "has the tendency of placing the motion picture industry on the defensive, insofar as the public is concerned, and of making the public look upon picture entertainment as the loser to television—having surrendered to it".

The article was in no wise "defensive". I don't think now, nor did I ever think that Hollywood need be fearful of television. They need us more than we need them. We producers have the "know-how" to make great visual entertainment.

You question my having gone to the public on this issue of Television vs. The Movies. I have gone to the public because I find the public listens. It's an indirect, but a sure way of reaching exhibitors. They refuse to heed me otherwise because they consider me opposition. What they fail to note is that I am the "Loyal Opposition".

I am pleased that you liked my Saturday Review of Literature piece defending Hollywood films abroad. I undertook it as a job of industry public relations. I have received letters of commendation, which I'd like you to see, from laymen all over the world, from editors and even many members of the government and Congress.

Except for your own comments, I have not received one letter from anyone else within the industry. Do you still ask why I don't go to the industry, instead of the public?

The point I tried to make in the New York Times is that television is a challenge to which we are not closing our eyes. It is a threat which we can't make disappear simply by waving a magic wand. Unless we are fully conscious of what is going on and guide ourselves accordingly, television can not only be a challenge, but could pass us by.

We must face squarely the fact that the public has invested close to a billion dollars in 3,500,000 video sets in the past couple of years. If you persist in thinking that it is a mistake to let the public know we are concerned about TV, you've overlooked the fact that most of the public already has an exaggerated view of our situation if they've read a Hollywood column, heard a commentator or seen a newspaper or magazine in the past year. The modern-day public is much too well-informed to be fooled by pretending we're not concerned. We'd be merely fooling only ourselves.

I've talked for years about another problem, double bills. I have been resented by exhibitors because they say the public insists on them. Now look at what has happened recently. At a recent Chicago "showmanship convention", a number of exhibitors suggested that the time had come to stop the double bills. Look at the comparative strength of business in Texas where Karl Hoblitzelle and Bob O'Donnell have never permitted duals. Ask New York's Harry Brandt why he states double features are giving the public "movie indigestion". Look at the attached resolution from a powerful New York community group asking my help in ending double features.

There is no sense in talking directly to the industry. First, we producers are not an "industry". Entertaining the public is primarily an art. The tragedy is that the "industry" is taking the money and the "art" is slowly starving to death.

It disheartens me when I read even the major companies' statements for the last year. Metro made an overall profit of \$3,000,000 but lost \$1,000,000 on production. 20th-Fox with the most successful product, earned a meager \$3,000,000 on \$94,000,000 of film rentals (suppose just one big picture had flopped?). Paramount made how many times the profit on its theatres that it did on production.

All the gambling in this business is being done by the producers—and they're not getting enough return to merit gambles that will keep theatres stocked with fine films. As the friend and guide of the theatre owners for so long a time, Pete, it would be tragic if you didn't point out the facts.

Don't let them forget that TV can pay Bob Hope \$40,000 for 90 minutes. And an offer of \$500,000 has been made for one single performance of "South Pacific" on television. We producers must compete with that.

As for your statement, Pete, that I had better start making good pictures, I'm sure you didn't quite mean what you wrote. I started to make good pictures 37 years ago and I've never stopped. My one aim has always been to make fine pictures and I think my record speaks for itself.

It's rather discouraging, though, when you talk scornfully about my next two pictures, "Our Very Own" and "Edge of Doom". They haven't even been trade-shown and will not be released before August. Is that fair, Pete? Perhaps you wrote what you did in the heat of temper. I'd rather think that.

Sincerely,

SAMUEL GOLDWYN

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THE TAX FIGHT MUST GO ON!

As most of you no doubt know by this time, the House Ways and Means Committee, which is studying the problem of reductions in excise taxes, has voted to cut the Federal admission tax from 20 per cent to 10 per cent.

Abram F. Myers, chairman of COMPO's Committee on Taxation and Legislation, issued the following statement immediately after the action taken by the House Committee:

"While half a loaf is better than none—and there was a time when it appeared we would not get even a crumb—I nevertheless am deeply disappointed that the Ways and Means Committee voted to retain a 10% tax.

"It must be understood that this action is tentative and that there is still a chance that the exhibitors' friends on the Ways and Means Committee can bring about a more favorable action.

"When COMPO is formally organized on May 8 the authority of the Committee on Taxation and Legislation will end. It has not yet been decided whether to hold another meeting before that time.

"This much is certain: Those members of the Tax Committee who have worked wholeheartedly for repeal will urge COMPO to carry on the fight until all admission taxes have been abolished. The motion picture industry—and a lot of Congressmen—have promised the movie patrons that they will be relieved of the tax and that promise must be kept.

"I sincerely hope that this temporary reverse will not plunge the industry into pessimism but will be accepted as a challenge to do a better job in the Senate than it has in the House."

According to a report in *Motion Picture Daily*, there has developed in some industry quarters a feeling of timidity that is all for settling for the half-a-loaf offered lest further pressure antagonize the House Committee and cause it to withdraw the tax cut it has already proffered.

HARRISON'S REPORTS hopes that no exhibitor will fall in with this line of reasoning, for any relaxation of the effective tax fight that has thus far been waged may very well result in our losing even the proposed fifty per cent cut.

The exhibitor must bear in mind that the tax cut voted by the Ways and Means Committee, even if it is passed by the House of Representatives, where all tax bills must originate, is not the final word. The proposal will still require the approval of the Senate Finance Committee and the Senate itself. And even if it succeeds in passing both the House and the Senate, there is still the question of a Presidential veto, by no means a remote possibility because of the fact that the President, not only did not recommend a reduction in the admission tax, but threatened to veto any bill that did not provide for new taxes in an amount equal to the revenue lost on excise tax cuts. Thus far, there is every indication that the revenue lost from the excise tax cuts approved by the Committee will be much greater than the revenue that will be gained from any new impositions.

To be remembered also is that other industries, which either have failed to get a reduction or are dissatisfied with the cuts granted to them, will wage a strong battle for better treatment from the Senate Finance Committee, and, unless the motion picture industry continues to make itself heard in no uncertain terms, the pressure on both the House and Senate committees from other sources may very well result in the admission tax being boosted again.

Mr. Myers is right! The tax repeal fight must not only be continued but intensified!

HOW SOME INDUSTRY EXECUTIVES FEEL ABOUT TELEVISION — No. 6

Responding to my request for his views on television and its effect on the motion picture industry, Mr. Nicholas M. Schenck, president of Loew's, Incorporated, has sent me the following statement:

"Upon my return to New York, I find your letter asking me to express some thoughts on the future of motion picture exhibition. As you know, Mr. Harrison, I always have resisted the temptation to assume the role of a prophet. Sometimes I think we have too many prophets too willing to express either over-optimism or over-pessimism.

"You tell me that small exhibitors are panic-stricken as a result of the advent of television. I am sorry to hear that. I hope that such reports are exaggerations. I see no reason for panic.

"Some of us have been in this business too long to turn pale each time a new competitor comes into view. I have seen this business go through many ups and downs—and land on its feet. There may be some who find it to their advantage to write the obituary of the motion picture business. They are premature by a long, long time.

"Television, like any other competitive factor, is not to be brushed off or ignored. Deep, serious consideration must be given to meeting this new competition. There are many good showmanship minds busy on the problem. They'll come up with an answer.

"In the meantime, the most disturbing cloud is an apparent tendency to let fear color our thinking. 'Desperation remedies' growing out of panic-thinking is just what we do not need now. I read in the trade press too often suggestions for 'free shows,' price-cutting without awaiting Congressional action on the tax repeal, exaggerated give-aways and other evidences of the fear-complex. In previous periods of uncertainty, we had similar thinking and it didn't help a return to prosperity.

"The recent effort to stimulate active showmanship and build a fighting spirit among exhibitors is a step in the right direction. With studios bending every effort to turn out better pictures and exhibitors intensifying their efforts to sell them to the public, the results are bound to be good. So far as Loew's theatres are concerned, we are urging our managers not to talk gloom or disaster but to buckle down and fight for business.

"I have been interested to note how many of our pioneer, successful exhibitors now have their grown sons in business with them. Apparently those veterans have confidence in the future of the motion picture business and are not letting any temporary problem change this attitude about the future.

"This is no time for either complacency or panic. It is a time of challenge. We see no reason why the challenge cannot be met."

THE CEREBRAL PALSY CAMPAIGN

Throughout the month of May, the United Cerebral Palsy Associations is conducting a national campaign to raise \$5,000,000 to establish clinics and assemble competent professional personnel to aid the more than 546,000 Americans affected by cerebral palsy, of whom more than 200,000 are children.

Cerebral palsy is a condition—not a disease. It is caused when those parts of the brain that control the muscles fail to develop properly before birth, or when they are damaged at birth through injury or accident. In later life it can result as the aftermath of sickness, accident or cerebral hemorrhage "stroke."

(Continued on back page)

"The Fighting Stallion" with Bill Edwards and Doris Merrick

(Eagle-Lion, no rel. date set; time, 63 min.)

There is little to recommend in this ordinary outdoor program melodrama; it will barely make the grade even as the lower half of a double bill in secondary situations. The story is feeble, the direction undistinguished, and the acting awkward. There is some excitement in the several scenes that show a fight between two stallions and an attack on a young colt by wild dogs, but on the whole the action is too slow to hold one's interest. The cliché-ridden dialogue does not help matters:—

Released from a Navy hospital, Bill Edwards learns that his blurring sight is a warning of eventual blindness. He rushes back to the Wyoming ranch of his father (Forrest Taylor), where he takes a liking to Starlight, a spirited white stallion, despite warnings that the animal is a killer. Edwards tames the horse and trains him to take him over dangerous trails carefully, in preparation for the day when he will have gone blind. One day he meets on the trail Doris Merrick, a nurse at a dude ranch nearby, and in due time both fall madly in love. But Edwards, realizing that he was going blind, avoids her. Meanwhile a big black stallion roams the area to steal mares, and in the course of one of his raids kills a pinto stallion owned by one of the ranch hands. Starlight leaps to the rescue and routs the black stallion, but the ranch hand erroneously believes that Starlight had killed his horse. Several days later, when Edwards trips on a rock, suffers a concussion and goes blind, his father blames Starlight and determines to shoot the horse, who had gone in search of the black stallion. Edwards then tells his father and Doris the truth about his blindness and about Starlight's role in his life. Starlight returns home after a victorious battle with the black stallion, and later proves his worth by guiding the blind Edwards through a raging fire that threatened the ranch. It all ends with the news that Doris has obtained the services of a famous doctor who could restore Edwards' sight.

It was produced by Jack Schwarz and directed by Robert Tansey from a screen play by Frances Kavanaugh, based on a story by George P. Slavin.

Harmless for the family circle.

"The Perfect Woman" with Patricia Roc

(Eagle-Lion, no rel. date set; time, 87 min.)

A mildly amusing British-made comedy-farce. It may get some laughs from those who are easily amused, but for the most part the story is too silly to be genuinely funny. The action is lively, but the comedy is so forced that most of it falls flat. With a bit more subtlety in its presentation, it could have turned out to be a saucy and amusing bit of nonsense. As it stands, its appeal to the American picture-goers will be limited.

Briefly, the plot deals with a scientist who invents a mechanically operated robot woman, who obeys a set series of commands. In order to prove that his invention is indistinguishable from a normal woman, the scientist engages Nigel Patrick, an impoverished young man-about-town, to take the robot out for an evening. Patrick, desiring not to be seen with the robot, instructs Stanley Holloway, his valet, to rent the bridal suite at a prominent hotel. Patricia Roc, the inventor's niece, after whom the robot's facial features and figure had been modelled, learns of the intended outing and decides to substitute herself for the robot. Unaware of the substitution, Patrick and Holloway take Patricia to the bridal suite, where all become involved in a series of misadventures because of the fact that the two men treat Patricia as the dummy they believe her to be. Complications arise when they put her to bed and Patrick's rich aunt, believing that he had eloped, arrives to pay her respects to the bride. Patrick explains that the figure in bed is a robot, and the aunt, to convince herself, jabs Patricia with a hat pin, causing her to sit up and howl. Her deception discovered, Patricia

arranges for the robot to be brought to the hotel and summons the aunt to examine it. The aunt wields her pin again, and the robot, her mechanism short-circuited, hurls herself into a frenzy of uncontrolled activity, wrecking the bridal suite.

It was produced by George and Alfred Black, and directed by Bernard Knowles, who wrote the screen play with George Black, based on the play by Wallace Geoffrey and Basil John Mitchell.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The Asphalt Jungle" with Sterling Hayden, Louis Calhern and Jean Hagen

(MGM, June; time, 112 min.)

This is a crackerjack crime melodrama, strictly adult in theme and in treatment. Expertly written, directed and acted, it should go over very well with those who enjoy this type of entertainment, for it is packed with excitement and suspense and grips one's attention from start to finish. Its lack of strong marquee names no doubt will be compensated for by the word-of-mouth plugging it is sure to receive. The tightly-woven story, peopled by a sordid but fascinating group of crooked characters, unwinds smoothly and logically, and its many unexpected twists keep one's interest alive throughout. Each member of the proficient cast plays his or her role with conviction, but top acting honors go to Sam Jaffe for his characterization of a middle-aged, notorious jewel thief, who engineers one of the most exciting jewel robberies ever staged on the screen. In the opinion of this reviewer, MGM would do well to consider a change in the title lest its meaning go over the heads of many movie-goers, who may think that it is just another jungle melodrama:—

A brief synopsis cannot do justice to the interesting story twists. The principal characters are Sterling Hayden, a holdup man; Jean Hagen his girl-friend; James Whitmore, his shady but loyal friend; Marc Lawrence, operator of a bookie joint under the protection of police lieutenant Barry Kelley; Sam Jaffe, a notorious jewel thief just out of prison; and Louis Calhern, a prominent but crooked criminal lawyer. All are brought together when Jaffe comes to Lawrence with a scheme to rob a large jewelry store, provided \$50,000 could be raised for expenses. Lawrence talks Calhern into agreeing to furnish the money, and arranges for Hayden, Whitmore and Anthony Caruso, an expert safe-cracker, to help Jaffe. In the development of the plot, it turns out that Calhern doesn't have the needed cash, but he persuades Lawrence to put up the money himself. Meanwhile he guarantees to dispose of the jewels through an important fence. Actually, however, he had entered into a scheme with Brad Dexter, a shady private detective, to double-cross Jaffe and the others after the delivery of the jewels. In the exciting events that follow, the robbery comes off as planned, but Hayden foils the double-cross by killing Dexter, although suffering a bullet wound himself. Calhern is left to dispose of the body and to arrange a pay-off with the insurance company for the return of the jewels, while Hayden and Jaffe go into hiding. Dexter's body is eventually found by the police and a clue in his jacket pocket leads them to Calhern, who commits suicide. In the meantime, lieutenant Kelley, seeking to make himself famous, forces a confession from Lawrence. This leads to the arrest of Whitmore and Jaffe. Hayden, however, flees to his farm home in Kentucky with Jean by his side, only to die as soon as he arrives there.

Others who figure importantly in the story are John McIntire, as the police commissioner trying to clean up corruption in his department; Marilyn Monroe, as Calhern's 18-year-old mistress; and Dorothy Tree, as his invalid wife.

It was produced by Arthur Hornblow, Jr., and directed by John Huston, who wrote the screen play in collaboration with Ben Maddow, from a novel by W. R. Burnett.

Strictly adult fare.

"Caged" with Eleanor Parker, Agnes Moorehead and Hope Emerson

(Warner Bros., June 10; time, 96 min.)

An interesting but grim prison melodrama. Those who will see the picture with a critical eye will agree that it is a fine production so far as direction and acting are concerned, but it can hardly be called an entertainment, for its depiction of life in a corrupt-ridden women's prison is too depressing. Although it is hardly believable that the brutality and inhumaneness depicted in this picture could possibly exist in any prison in these days, the story, as handled, is a gripping account of how a basically good girl, a first offender, becomes so embittered at the harsh treatment meted out to her that she leaves the prison hardened and destined for a life of crime. The whole atmosphere of the picture is one of hopelessness and morbidity and, though it is strictly adult fare, its many moments of violence and brutality may be too strong for sensitive persons:—

Eleanor Parker, a 19-year-old pregnant widow, is sentenced to prison when she becomes involved in a gas station holdup. After two depressing weeks in the medical isolation ward, Eleanor is interviewed by Agnes Moorehead, understanding superintendent of the prison, and assigned to do light work in the prison laundry. She is put under the charge of Hope Emerson, a sadistic matron, who supplemented her prison salary with bribes from the inmates for special favors, with particular attention paid to Betty Garde, who recruited girls from within the prison for a shoplifting syndicate. Hope soon vents her wrath on Eleanor when she learns that she has no friends to supply money for special privileges. Betty tries to enlist Eleanor for the syndicate, but she declines out of a desire to lead a lawful life at the end of her term. The injustices inflicted upon Eleanor by Hope bring about the premature birth of her baby, and to add to her misery the law compels her to give the baby up for adoption. Looking forward to the day of her release, Eleanor is overjoyed when she is granted a parole hearing, but, when the board refuses to parole her on the ground that she has no home or job, she becomes despondent and hardened at the thought of another six months' imprisonment. Finally goaded beyond endurance by Hope's inhumanity towards her and the other inmates, Eleanor attacks her and starts a riot. She is put into solitary confinement and, unknown to the superintendent, Hope clips her hair almost to the scalp as a final humiliation. Miss Moorehead, learning of this, demands that the prison commission dismiss Hope, but Hope pulls political strings and retains her job. Meanwhile Lee Patrick, a new prisoner, had taken over the work handled by Betty for the syndicate, and Betty had become the object of Hope's intense hatred. Taunted to desperation, Betty murders Hope by plunging a fork into her neck. Realizing that she must have employment to get by the parole board, Eleanor turns to Lee, whose vice syndicate finds a phony job for her. She leaves the prison a hard-faced, bitter woman, prepared to be launched on a career of crime.

It was produced by Jerry Wald and directed by John Cromwell from a story by Virginia Kellog and Bernard C. Schoenfeld.

Strictly adult fare.

"Forbidden Jungle" with Don Harvey

(Eagle-Lion, no rel. date set; time, 67 min.)

A minor program jungle melodrama, obviously produced on a modest budget. The plot, which is up to the intelligence of a ten-year-old child, is too preposterous to be taken seriously. A considerable part of the footage is given over to familiar library clips of wild animal scenes, including several that show vicious fights between the animals. These animal shots may give the film a modicum of interest for those who have never seen them, but even these are not enough to sustain one's attention in the proceedings as a whole. Most patrons will probably laugh derisively at the antics of a huge studio-made gorilla, whose attack on a femal jungle native was obviously included for the benefit

of the grind houses that specialize in the exploitation of this type of pictures. Most theatres will find the film best suited for the Saturday matinee trade. The direction and acting are amateurish:—

Don Harvey, a famed explorer, goes to the African jungle to track down a wild jungle boy, an assignment he had accepted from a wealthy American who believes that the boy is his grandson. He comes to a village deep in the jungle, where he is met by Forrest Taylor, a retired white trader, who ruled the natives together with Alyce Louis, his half-caste daughter. Both try unsuccessfully to dissuade Harvey from his mission. Alyce races ahead to warn the boy, Robert Cabal, to stay out of Harvey's way. In the course of events the boy, on friendly terms with all the wild animals, meets Harvey on a jungle path and saves his life when a lion leaps for the kill. Harvey and the boy become fast friends, and the youngster saves his life once again when a man-eating tiger escapes from a cage and attacks him. In a not-too-clear ending, after it is brought out that the boy is actually Taylor's grandson, Harvey departs for home, happy that he did not have to separate the youngster from his beloved jungle.

It was produced by Jack Schwarz and directed by Robert Tansey from an original story and screen play by Frances Kavanaugh.

Harmless for children.

"Colt .45" with Randolph Scott, Ruth Roman and Zachary Scott

(Warner Bros., May 27; time, 74 min.)

Technicolor photography and the marquee value of the leading players give this otherwise standard Western melodrama a decided lift. It should serve as a top attraction for houses that cater to the Western fans, and as a strong supporting feature in other spots. The story itself follows a familiar pattern, and some of the situations are extremely far-fetched, but it has enough hard-riding pursuits, blazing gun battles and fistic combats to satisfy those who are more concerned with movement than with logic. The acting is generally good, but Zachary Scott, who plays the part of a diabolical villain, overacts the role badly:—

While trying to sell the new Colt repeating pistols to a sheriff in a frontier town, Randolph Scott, a gun salesman, is overpowered by Zachary Scott, a prisoner, who takes the guns, kills the sheriff, and makes a getaway. Randolph is jailed in the belief that he aided Zachary and is not released until four months later. Meanwhile Zachary, fortified with the new repeating pistols, had become head of a gang of outlaws, terrorizing the neighboring country with holdups and killings. Randolph sets out to recover his guns and stumbles across an attempt by Zachary's gang to hold up a stagecoach. He jumps to the top of the stage from an overhanging rock and disperses the outlaws with his deadly aim, despite the interference of Ruth Roman, a passenger, who makes a getaway on a riderless horse when the stage comes to a halt. When Randolph arrives in town with the stage, Alan Hale, the sheriff, secretly in Zachary's pay, makes him a deputy. In the course of events, Randolph learns that Ruth cooperated with Zachary because Lloyd Bridges, her weakling husband, was one of his henchmen. Randolph manages to capture two of Zachary's outlaws and, while they are being tried before a judge, Zachary, aided by Hale, manages to release them and throw suspicion on Randolph as an outlaw because of the Colt guns he carried. Ruth, fed up with lawlessness, rides hard into town to tell the truth, only to be shot down by her husband. Randolph makes a getaway during the excitement, taking the wounded Ruth with him. Both are given protection by a tribe of Indians friendly to Randolph. In the meantime Zachary takes over the control of the town, killing the sheriff and Ruth's husband in the process. Randolph, accompanied by the Indians, steals back into town and one by one picks off Zachary's henchmen. It ends with Randolph killing Zachary in a final gun duel, and with Ruth declaring her love for him.

It was produced by Saul Elkins and directed by Edwin L. Marin from an original screen play by Thomas Blackburn.

Suitable for the family.

There is no known cure for this condition, but medical advancement in the last three decades has made it possible to help those affected become assets to society instead of economic, social and physical liabilities. Today, however, there are treatment and education facilities for only 2,500 of the more than one-half million Americans affected by the condition.

The motion picture industry is participating in this worthwhile campaign and, according to a report by Gael Sullivan, executive director of TOA, and Rotus Harvey, president of PCCITO, who are the national exhibitor co-chairmen, more than seven thousand theatres have thus far pledged their support.

Of the numerous humanitarian projects supported by the exhibitors in the past, few have been of greater importance than the current campaign being conducted by the Palsy Associations, and none more deserving of support.

"Rocketship XM" with Lloyd Bridges, Osa Massen and John Emery

(Lippert, June 2; time, 78 min.)

This is chiefly an exploitation picture and therein lies its greatest value. Although the ending is weak since there was no way out for the author-producer-director than to wind up the picture in tragedy, the beginning and most of the action up to the end is interesting and impresses one with realism. In some stretches, however, the action is slow. There are some technical errors. For instance, though some articles are shown as floating in the air as the space ship approaches the moon and gravity is weakened, the hair of the crew remains combed slick. The use of magnetism to make the hair stand on end would have imparted greater realism. But perhaps the average person will not notice this defect. The photography is sharp and clear:—

Set to be launched for a trip to the moon, the Rocketship XM is made ready at the proving grounds in White Sands, New Mexico. The crew includes Lloyd Bridges, the pilot; Osa Massen, fuel expert; John Emery, head of the expedition; Noah Beery, Jr., engineer; and Hugh O'Brian, astronomer and navigator. Morris Ankrum, ground head of the expedition, stays beside a powerful short-wave radio to receive messages as soon as the ship is launched. The ship takes off in a blaze of fiery gases, hurtling upward at a terrific speed until it escapes the earth's attraction. All communication with the earth is ended when the ship reaches outer space. An error in the fuel mixture makes it impossible for the engineer to slow up the ship's speed as it approaches the moon, causing all aboard to lose consciousness. When they recover, they find that the ship had veered from its course and, instead of reaching the moon, was now approaching Mars. They land safely and begin exploring the desolate wasteland, which they find had once been inhabited by a civilization superior to that of the earth, but had been destroyed by an atomic blast. Suddenly they are attacked with rocks and they perceive in the distance human beings who seemed to be the remnants of the once civilized Mars. The explorers shoot at them with rifles, but two of them, Emery and Beery, are hit by rocks and killed. The remaining members manage to reach the Rocketship and start their return to the earth. Shortage of fuel, however, makes it impossible for the navigator to slow up the ship, and it crashes into the earth, killing all aboard. Ankrum and his co-workers on the ground consider the expedition a success and determine to begin building Rocketship No. 2.

The story was written, produced and directed by Kurt Neumann.

Suitable for the family circle.

"Rock Island Trail" with Forrest Tucker, Adele Mara, Adrian Booth, Bruce Cabot and Chill Wills

(Republic, no rel. date set; time, 90 min.)

A fine epic of the old west, photographed in Trucolor. The action is fast all the way through, and there are many thrilling situations, some of them caused by fights between Indians and whites, and between the Indians themselves. The acting of all is good, but that of Adrian Booth, as the European-educated daughter of an Indian chief, is superb. Forrest Tucker is a manly hero, and Bruce Cabot a mean villain. Adele Mara is winsome and inspires one with sympathy. The scenes where Cabot cuts a blazing steamboat from its moorings so that it might drift and collide with the railroad bridge, are thrilling. There is much excitement

and novelty in the fight between Tucker and Cabot, with long-handled mops as the weapons. There are a number of other situations that hold one's interest tense. With the exception of several sequences in the beginning, the color is good. The photography is sharp:—

Tucker, construction engineer for the Rock Island Railroad, dreams of some day pushing the road all the way to the West Coast from the State of Illinois. But he is opposed by investors who had no faith in the railroad's future in the west, and by the stagecoach and steamship companies. Chill Wills, chief engine operator of the railroad, has faith in Tucker and stands by him. During a race between one of his trains and a fast stagecoach, in which the train wins, Tucker meets Adele Mara, daughter of Grant Withers, a big banker. They fall in love. Her father, a cautious man in investment matters, sees great possibilities in Tucker's ambitions and backs him with sufficient capital to lay track all the way to the Mississippi, to span the River, and to get plans under way to continue the roadbed to Fort Fletcher, Iowa, with added financial assistance from the Government itself. Tucker finds himself harrassed at every turn by Bruce Cabot, a treacherous steamboat tycoon, who felt that Tucker's plans threatened his interests. Besides, he sought revenge because Adele, his former fiancée, had dropped him for Tucker. Cabot, a crackshot, challenges Tucker to a duel. Tucker, having the choice of weapons, grabs two mops, hands one to Cabot, and defeats and humiliates him. Cabot, secretly, sets fire to a steamboat and lets it drift into the river bridge, wrecking it. Aware that Cabot was guilty but lacking proof, Tucker enlists the aid of Abraham Lincoln (played by Jeff Corey), a young lawyer, who takes the case to court and wins a judgment against Cabot's steamboat company for the damages incurred. Having failed to block the extending of the railroad, Cabot schemes with a group of renegade Sioux Indians to attack a train carrying an army payroll, mail, guns and ammunition. The attack, however, turns into a pitched battle between the renegades and a force of Sioux Indians friendly to the railroad; their help had been obtained by Adrian Booth, the chief's daughter, whose unsuccessful efforts to win Tucker's love had not turned her against him. In the course of the fight, both Adrian and Cabot are killed. The last obstacle for the completion of the road to the West Coast having been removed, Tucker and Adele turn their thoughts to marriage.

It was produced by Paul Malvern, under the supervision of Herbert Yates. Sr. Joseph Kane directed it from a screen play by James Edward Grant, based on the novel, "A Yankee Dared," by Frank J. Nevins.

Suitable for the entire family.

"Faust and the Devil" with an Italian cast

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 87 min.)

Of the pictures that have been produced either here or abroad, "Faust and the Devil" is tops from every angle—that of singing, clarity of story, cast, and all the other production values. Even though the picture has been produced in Italian, the few English sub-titles make the story clear to every non-Italian but English-speaking person. The voices are excellent, the acting professional, the actors pleasant to look at, and the dramatic effects of the highest standard. Although few American theatres book foreign films, an exception might be made in this case, provided that no effort is made to sell the picture to the rank-and-file movie-goers. The selling campaign should be aimed at the cultured picture-goers, and when these begin to flock in the others will follow. The photography is a treat to the eye.

The story is founded on Goethe's "Faust," in which Dr. Faust, an old man, sells his soul to the Devil for youth and pleasure. The Devil does give Faust youth, and under his instructions he becomes acquainted with Marguerite, with whom he falls in love. He seduces her under the urgings of the Devil. Faust is drawn away from Marguerite by the Devil, and when she gives birth to a child the people look down upon her as a wanton. To escape their scorn, she drowns the child. She is arrested and found guilty of murder, and condemned by the church to be burned at the stake. By this time Marguerite realizes her error, repents, and after the burning her soul ascends into Heaven.

Gregor Rabinovich produced it, and Carmine Gallone directed it, from a screen play by Leopold Marchand, who based it, as said, on Goethe's opera. The cast includes Italo Tajo, Nelly Corradi, Onelia Fineschi, Gino Matterna, Onofrio Scarfoglio, Terese Dorny, Gilles Queant, Cesare Barbetti and others.

Suitable for everybody. The seduction scene is handled delicately.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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COMPO NOW OFFICIAL

The Council of Motion Picture Organizations was launched officially on Monday and Tuesday of this week, when representatives of the ten charter member groups that conceived the organization last August met at the Drake Hotel, in Chicago, to report the ratifications of their groups, amend and approve the by-laws, and to elect temporary officers until a charter is granted to the organization by the State of New York in about two weeks.

Following the granting of the charter, COMPO's Executive Board will hold its first meeting, at which time the following roster of officers will be nominated for a full term of one year:

Ned E. Depinet, president, and nine vice-presidents, representing the heads of the different constituent groups as follows: Ellis Arnall, president, Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers; Harry Brandt, president, Independent Theatre Owners Association; Leo Brecher, president, Metropolitan Motion Picture Theatres Association; Roy Brewer, chairman, Motion Picture Industry Council; Abel Green, chairman, Trade Press Committee; Rotus Harvey, president, Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners; Samuel Pinanski, president, Theatre Owners of America; Ronald Reagan, co-chairman of the MPIC and president of the Screen Actors Guild; and Trueman Rembusch, president, National Allied.

Robert J. O'Donnell, Variety, International delegate, was nominated for the post of treasurer, and Francis S. Harmon, of the Motion Picture Producers Association, was nominated as secretary.

Since the officers nominated are representative of the constituent groups and are located geographically in various sections of the country, it is expected that substantially the same slate will be elected.

The by-laws provide for a paid, full-time executive vice-president, who shall be the chief administrative officer of the organization, but his selection was deferred pending a study of the qualifications of potential candidates by one of the five committees the president was authorized to appoint. This responsibility was delegated to the Committee on Management and Personnel, which will submit its recommendation to COMPO's Executive's Board, which in turn must act unanimously thereon.

The other four committees authorized include a Committee on Organization, which will chart the functional setup of COMPO; a Committee on Finance, which will study the problems incident to the control of expenditures, and to the financing of COMPO through the voluntary contributions by exhibitors and distributors of one-tenth of one per cent of film rentals, with September 1, 1950 set as the starting date for such contributions; a Committee on Additional Members for COMPO, such as supply organizations, firms handling various concessions, etc.; and a Committee on Planning and Program, which will chart the activities of COMPO.

Abram F. Myers, chairman of COMPO's temporary Committee on Taxation and Legislation, was lauded by all present for the exceptionally fine job done by himself and his committee members in the fight for repeal of the Federal admissions tax. A resolution was adopted unanimously urging the continuation of an aggressive campaign in both the House and in the Senate, and promising full support in carrying out any plans the Committee may decide upon to bring about complete repeal of the tax. Mr. Myers, follow-

ing this expression of confidence, agreed to continue as chairman of the committee.

Because of the recent suggestions that trade practices be included within COMPO's functions, and because National Allied and TOA made their ratifications conditional, many industryites looked upon the future of COMPO with misgivings, prior to the two-day meeting held this week. But any feelings of doubt and apprehension any one might have had were dispelled, according to those present, by the harmonious atmosphere that prevailed throughout the sessions, and by the demonstration of sincerity on the part of all concerned to get the movement under way. This was evidenced by the unanimous adoption of a clause in the by-laws specifically excluding trade practices from the organization's functions.

Another cause for apprehension was a report that the TOA leaders, at several meetings conducted in New York last week, had complemented their original reservations with a number of conditions that, if adopted, would have so impeded the new organization's operations as to make it powerless. According to one report, Gael Sullivan, TOA's delegate at the meeting, did not advance these conditions in the interest of unity.

The harmonious attitude that prevailed at all three meetings thus far held by COMPO's organizers is a clear demonstration that the industry's leaders have taken up the movement for a unified public relations program with sincerity and enthusiasm, and one cannot help feeling that any causes of friction that may still exist will be removed in due time.

There is no question that, in COMPO, unity has been achieved. Let's put this unity to work—and fast!

TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX FILM CORPORATION
444 WEST 56TH STREET
NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

May 4, 1950

MR. PETER HARRISON
HARRISON'S REPORTS
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

Your editorial "Let the Distributors Stop Penalizing the Exhibitor for His Showmanship Work" naturally interested me very deeply, because it comes at a time when the greatest need exists for the exhibitor and producer to try and work out their problems on a fair and equitable basis so that both will derive a fair profit and enjoy a healthy growth.

I believe that this is what you want too, and I believe that you realize that the most acute issue that confronts our industry today is that of enabling the producer to continue to furnish films of high quality to the theatres so that both the exhibitor and distributor can remain in business and have a chance to prosper. It is the vital concern of the theatreman to realize that our whole industry faces a crisis because of the plight of the producing companies.

Therefore, as an old exhibitor, I am dismayed by the philosophy put forth in your editorial by yourself and Colonel Cole asking for increased concessions in film rentals.

It is equally dismaying to read the suggestion that some exhibitors decline to exert showmanship because they will pay more film rental to the distributor. As an old exhibitor, I think we should abandon any such antiquated suspicions.

(Continued on back page)

**"Love That Brute" with Paul Douglas,
Jean Peters and Cesar Romero**
(20th Century-Fox, June; time, 85 min.)

A good comedy farce. It is a remake of "Tall, Dark and Handsome," produced by 20th-Fox in 1940, and although it revolves around Chicago gangsters during the 1928 bootlegging days, it is not a typical gangster melodrama. It pokes fun at the racketeer types of the period, and the hero, though a gang leader, is not vicious. The accent is on comedy, and the characterizations are colorful. Paul Douglas, as the kind-hearted gang leader who bluffs his rivals into believing that he is a "killer," fits the role like a glove, and his romantic interest in Jean Peters, a small-town girl, is both sympathetic and amusing. Much laughter is provoked by Peter Price, a talented youngster, who poses as Douglas' son and affects the mannerisms and dialogue of a typical hoodlum. Keenan Wynn, as Douglas' lieutenant, and Joan Davis, as the wife of a gangster, add much to the gaiety by their antics:—

Douglas, a racketeer, becomes interested in Jean Peters, a welfare worker, but conceals his identity because of the fact that she was a decent girl. He leads her to believe that he is a widower, and engages her as a governess for Peter Price, a fatherless youngster, who poses as his son. Peter, a tough kid whose father had been a gangster, causes Douglas considerable embarrassment. Jean learns of the deception when Douglas receives a visit from Cesar Romero, a rival gang leader. Infuriated, she leaves Douglas, but first makes sure that young Peter is placed in a military school. Jean obtains a job as a singer in a night-club, but quits when she learns that Douglas owned it. Later that night, Douglas, although despondent over his break with Jean, gives a party at his home to celebrate a truce that had been reached between Romero and himself not to "bump off" each other's henchmen. Young Peter arrives on the scene, having run away from school, and Jean comes to the house to inquire about him. Keenan Wynn, Douglas' aide, tries to convince Jean that Douglas is really a gentle person, and to prove it he takes her down to the basement and shows her that fourteen of Romero's henchmen, whom Douglas had supposedly killed, were alive and happy but behind bars. Wynn explains that Douglas could not release the men lest Romero realize that he is not as tough as he pretended to be. When the imprisoned gangsters escape and make their presence known at the party, Romero, no longer afraid of Douglas, orders two of them to take Douglas for a "ride." But the henchmen, remembering Douglas' kindness, permit him to escape. Douglas orders Wynn to plant his ring on an unrecognizable body in the morgue, so that it would be identified as his, then arranges matters in a way that results in Romero being sentenced to life imprisonment for his "murder." He manages to let Romero know that he is still alive, and tells him that, although he had committed many murders, he would have to pay for one he had not committed. While Romero, claiming that Douglas is alive, is led to prison screaming with rage, Douglas arranges to marry Jean and settle down to a respectable life in a small town.

It was produced by Fred Kohlmar and directed by Alexander Hall, from a screen play by Karl Tunberg, Darrell Ware and John Lee Mahin. The cast includes Arthur Treacher, Jay C. Flippin, Leon Belasco and others.

Adult fare.

"Congolaise"

(Film Classics, April; time, 68 min.)

This is not a feature picture in the regular sense of the word, but it has entertainment values that exceed those of many a highly expensive feature. It is really a travelogue, showing the customs and habits of aborigines, who live along the banks of the Ogowe River, which flows for one-half of its course, parallel to the Congo River. The record of this travelogue was made by young scientists, sent by the French Government in collaboration with the French Museum, to serve as a lasting record of the primitive tribes before they become engulfed by the civilization of the white man. The expedition goes through plateaus, steaming swamps, grasslands and impenetrable jungles. There are thrilling shots of hunts by the natives for lions, antelopes, and elephants, as well as a highly exciting gorilla hunt, during which a massive 750-lb. gorilla king is killed and other huge gorillas are driven off the trees, where they had taken refuge. The lives of the hunters are placed in jeopardy, and one or two of them are torn by the animals. The natives were compelled to kill the wild animals to stop the disappearance of children and of many adults, carried away by them into the jungle.

The customs and habits of the different tribes, their

religious activities and other doings are highly interesting.

Since no worthwhile animal picture has been shown for a long time, it is likely that "Congolaise" will appeal to picture-goers of all types. Several of the scenes that show the natives cutting up the wild animals immediately after the kill may prove a bit too strong for those with weak stomachs.

The picture was produced by Jack Rieger, and directed by Jacques Dupont. Although the story is supposed to have been written by Peter Ordway, as told to him by Robert St. John and Ray Morgan, it is insignificant and none was really necessary, for one's interest lies in the activities of the ferocious animals and the struggle of the natives for survival against them. Good for the entire family.

**"Woman from Headquarters" with
Virginia Huston and Robert Rockwell**

(Republic, May 1; time, 60 min.)

A minor program melodrama. As indicated by the title, the picture deals with the exploits of policewomen in combatting crime, but it misses its mark as an action entertainment, for it is given more to talk than to movement. Moreover, the story is full of inconsistencies, and the melodramatic adventures of the heroine are too far-fetched to be plausible. Not much can be said for the acting, but the players are not to blame, for they were up against ordinary direction, poor dialogue, and a badly written script:—

Virginia Huston, an ex-Army nurse, is dismayed when Barbra Fuller, her roommate, becomes involved with the law because of her love for Norman Budd, a petty thief. Virginia becomes friendly with Frances Charles, a policewoman who had tried to set Barbra straight, and decides to join the police force. While Virginia undergoes tests and an intensive training period, Barbra elopes to Chicago with Budd. Virginia's exceptional ability as a rookie soon comes to the attention of her superiors who, engaged in a campaign to clean up vice, assign her to pose as a bar-girl in a notorious cafe owned by Otto Waldis, a shady character who managed to steer clear of the law. She wins Waldis' confidence and in due time catches him in the act of "rolling" a drunk and places him under arrest with the aid of Robert Rockwell, a detective assigned to work with her. Having proved themselves as a team, Virginia and Rockwell, by this time in love, are assigned to obtain evidence against a narcotics gang. Learning that Barbra and Budd had been arrested because of his activities in the drug market, and that Barbra is about to have a baby, Virginia appeals to Budd to help the police track down the gang so as to make it easier for Barbra and himself. He is instrumental in leading her to the hideout of the gang, and there, with the assistance of Rockwell and other police officers, she rounds up the gang members and brings them to justice.

It was produced by Stephen Auer and directed by George Blair from a story and screen play by Gene Lewis.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Kind Hearts and Coronets"
with an all-English cast**

(Eagle-Lion, April; time, 101 min.)

A very fine British-made comedy of murder, revolving around a homicidal young nobleman who, to inherit a dukedom, cleverly commits eight "perfect" murders to eliminate the snobbish family members ahead of him in the line of succession. It is an extremely clever satire on the Victorian aristocracy, superbly written, directed and acted, but as entertainment its appeal in this country will be limited to the highbrow patrons of arty British films. The general run of movie-goers will find its sly humor a little too subtle, and its pace too slow. The competent cast is unknown to the American picture-goers, but their work is exceptionally good, particularly that of Alec Guinness, who plays with great skill no less than eight different roles, each being one of the ill-fated characters who succumb to the machinations of their ghoulish but charming relative, played by Dennis Price:—

Price, son of an English mother and Italian father, now dead, had been raised to be a nobleman, even though his mother, daughter of a duke, had been disowned because of her marriage to the Italian. When his mother's dying wish to be buried in the family vault is denied by the Duke, Price, acutely conscious that it was theoretically possible for him to inherit the dukedom, swears vengeance on the aristocratic family. He decides to murder the eight family members (all played by Alec Guinness) who were ahead of him in the line of succession. One by one, through a series of cleverly conceived "accidents," he manages to kill off the relatives, deftly diverting suspicion from himself and thus

inheriting the dukedom. Meanwhile he had made Charlotte Greenwood, a former sweetheart now married to John Penrose, his mistress, and had proposed marriage to Valerie Hobson, the beautiful widow of one of his victims. Penrose, facing bankruptcy, comes to Price for aid and commits suicide when he is refused. Charlotte, seeing her way clear to become the duchess, demands that Price marry her. When he declines, she frames him for the murder of her husband by hiding the suicide note and admitting that she had been Price's mistress. Sentenced to hang, he spends his time before the execution writing his autobiography, in which he outlines all the lurid details of the eight murders he had committed. On the day before the execution, Charlotte relents and "finds" the suicide note that proves his innocence. Taken to the prison gates to be freed, Price suddenly realizes that he had left his autobiography behind, but before he can recover it the prison authorities read his admissions. He is returned to the cell to await the hangman.

It was produced by Michael Balcon and directed by Robert Hamer from a screen play by John Dighton and the director. Adult entertainment.

"The Skipper Surprised His Wife" with Robert Walker and Joan Leslie

(MGM, no rel. date set; time, 85 min.)

This domestic comedy never quite hits a high note of hilarity, and there are moments when the proceedings become a bit dull, but despite its shortcomings it should prove fairly amusing to most movie-goers. Revolving around the misadventures of a young Navy officer who attempts to install Navy efficiency methods in the running of a household, the lightweight story has its share of laugh-provoking situations, but it falters in that much of the humor is forced and strained. Women, however, should find Robert Walker's travails, as he tries to cope with household duties, amusing. The direction and acting are adequate:—

Robert Walker, a Navy commander, is ordered back to his home base and assigned to study at the radar school under Edward Arnold, an admiral. Having been away from home for more than a year, Walker is greeted joyously by Joan Leslie, his wife, and their two young sons (Tommy Myers and Rudy Lee). But their joy is marred when Joan steps on one of the youngster's roller skates and breaks her ankle. Walker finds it necessary to take care of the housework and the children between classes. To have sufficient time for all his chores, he works out an efficiency system after much research work among the women in the neighborhood, and organizes it in accordance with Navy standards. He finds his system for doing housework so successful that he starts giving lectures to the women to induce them to use it in their homes. Meanwhile Spring Byington, the admiral's wife, and Joan, get together and hatch a plot to get their husbands to leave the Navy. In due time Walker's efficiency methods prove too much for Joan, who felt that their abode was no longer a home; she leaves him after a quarrel. Leon Ames, the family doctor, steps into the breach and, after showing Walker that he had lost sight of his obligations as a father and husband, patches up their differences. By this time both Walker and Arnold are given an opportunity to resign from Navy life, but they decide to go to sea rather than remain home all the time.

It was produced by William H. Wright and directed by Elliott Nugent from a story and screen play by Dorothy Kingsley, based on an article by Commander W. J. Lederer, U.S.N. Suitable for the family.

"The Admiral Was a Lady" with Edmond O'Brien, Wanda Hendrix and Rudy Vallee

(United Artists, August; time, 87 min.)

A frothy bit of nonsense. The fairly fast pace, the flip dialogue, and the lighthearted manner in which the incidental scenes are worked out are in the picture's favor, but these, unfortunately, are not enough to lift the picture above the level of moderately entertaining program fare. As a matter of fact, there is a question of good taste in the comic depiction of four healthy veterans existing on unemployment benefits because of an aversion to work, and of their efforts to avoid offers of jobs lest they be taken off the unemployment rolls. All this, of course, is played for laughs, but, in these days of rising unemployment, persons who must accept unemployment benefits for their very existence are too filled with heartbreak and frustration to see anything humorous in the situation.

The story, which is one of those "screwball" affairs with numerous complications, opens with the four veterans (Ed-

mond O'Brien, Johnny Sands, Steve Brody and Richard Erdman) making the acquaintance of Wanda Hendrix, an ex-WAVE, when all go to the unemployment offices to collect their weekly checks. Learning that Wanda was preparing to go back to her home town because her boy-friend, a man she had met overseas, had failed to arrive and marry her, the four men offer to entertain her until the time of her departure that evening. Their fun is disturbed when they are contacted by the unemployment service to report to the office of Rudy Vallee, a juke box king, for jobs. O'Brien, who guided the destinies of the group, goes to Vallee to talk him out of hiring them. It turns out that Vallee, through detectives, had been keeping an eye on Wanda's whereabouts, because her missing boy-friend had taken up with Hillary Brooke, Vallee's divorced wife. Vallee wanted his wife back, but the only way for him to accomplish this was to make Wanda pressure her boy-friend into coming back to her. Vallee threatens to put O'Brien and his pals to work unless they keep Wanda from leaving town and see to it that she breaks up the affair between her boy-friend and Hillary. From then on, the story goes completely haywire, with numerous complications brought about by the efforts of the four veterans to keep Wanda in town. In the end, Vallee gets his wife, while Wanda winds up in a clinch with O'Brien instead of with the boy-friend who had jilted her.

Here and there a situation is genuinely funny, but much of the comedy is strained. The action in the last few reels drags because of excessive talk.

It was produced and directed by Albert S. Rogell, from an original story and screen play by Sidney Salkow and John O'Dea. Edward Lewis was co-producer.

There are no objectionable sex situations.

"Father of the Bride" with Spencer Tracy, Joan Bennett and Elizabeth Taylor

(MGM, June; time, 92 min.)

Very good! Crammed with laughs, it is a mirthful, warmly appealing entertainment that is sure to be a crowd-pleaser, for most people in the audience will understand and appreciate the subject matter, which deals with the financial and emotional trials of a father when he marries off his daughter. The first meeting between the parents of the bride and groom; the concern of the father over the type of man who is about to marry his daughter; the important decisions and minor squabbles incident to the wedding arrangements—these and other recognizable problems are depicted in a way that keep the chuckles sympathetic as well as frequent. Spencer Tracy, as the harassed but well meaning father, is just perfect in the part, as is Joan Bennett, as his wife. Elizabeth Taylor is charming and impressive as the bride, and the fact that she has just become one in real life gives the picture a timely angle. The direction, production values, and photography are first rate:—

Tracy, a lawyer of moderate means, lives together with his wife, Joan, their daughter, Elizabeth, and their sons, Rusty Tamblin and Tom Irish. Tracy suddenly realizes that his daughter had grown up when she casually announces at dinner one evening that she is going to marry Don Taylor. Tracy has misgivings about the young man and about his parents (Billie Burke and Moroni Olson), but he becomes better acquainted with them in due time and finds them to be "regular." A family conference results in a decision that the wedding be small and intimate, much to Tracy's satisfaction, but he soon begins to fume and sputter as new items of expense are added day by day. Before long the original intentions get out of hand and the arrangements shape up as a big church wedding, with more than five hundred guests on the invitation list, and half as many invited to a reception at home. Tracy puts his foot down and demands that the invitation list be cut drastically, but he soon gives up when one or the other decides that certain persons must not be slighted. Numerous problems arise as the wedding day approaches, the most serious one being a break between the bride and groom over the honeymoon site, but all obstacles are eventually overcome, with Tracy the one most concerned about everything turning out according to plan. Despite the chaotic atmosphere, the wedding ceremony and the reception turn out to be a huge success. When the last guest departs, Tracy and Joan are weary but serenely happy.

It was produced by Pandro S. Berman and directed by Vincente Minnelli from a screen play by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, based on the novel by Edward Streeter. The cast includes Leo G. Carroll, Melville Cooper and others.

Fine for the entire family.

In proportion to their investment, their risk, and the service rendered to the theatres, the producing companies, since 1947, have either lost money or shown a very slight profit. Twentieth Century-Fox, which is considered a very successful company and a producer of good films year in and year out, had net earnings from film operations only of \$3,667,000 in 1947, \$3,768,000 in 1948, and \$3,899,000 in 1949. Based on the best estimates available, the aggregate theatre profits were around 250 million in 1947, around 200 million in 1948, and around 175 million in 1949. This is a lopsided condition with danger for all of us, most of all for the exhibitor.

Every distributor tries to sell pictures on their merits, bearing in mind their tremendous negative costs. While the exhibitor, in increasing his gross, pays more film rental, by the same token the theatre does make more money, and if, through negligence, grosses go down, the theatremen loses money. Colonel Cole's defeatist philosophy would not only eventually force distributors out of business, but the billions invested in the theatres would be imperiled because these theatres would be helpless without good films.

In my opinion, the record demonstrates that the sales plan of Twentieth Century-Fox and other companies is a fair basis for increasing grosses as well as profits, and the profit incentive for the exhibitor has in no way been eliminated.

As a matter of fact, production is the only part of show business which takes the lion's share of the gamble while the theatres get the lion's share of receipts and profits. Now the great problem of the exhibitor is to see that the producer not only remains in business and has incentive to earn some small profit, but is also encouraged to produce the higher quality films demanded by today's more exacting public tastes.

Our industry has reached great heights because it has been the producer's job to create pictures and the exhibitor's job to exploit and sell them to the maximum number of people. To make added concessions or inducements to the exhibitors now beyond the present conditions, and in spite of the unbalanced record, would put the producing companies in the red and force them to make very ordinary pictures that would be detrimental to the theatres.

Our record has always been that of serving the exhibitor. We launched a showmanship program in the hope that the present doldrums of low grosses would be changed to high grosses, benefitting producer and exhibitor alike, and in announcing recently that we would not supply films to Phonevision, we are following this same policy of allegiance to the thousands of theatremen who built up this business.

If we followed the advice you and Colonel Cole offer, I no doubt would win the short range gratitude of some exhibitors, but I would put my company out of business, for if the plan were followed by everybody the producer would indeed be out of business, and that would be catastrophic to everyone concerned,—the exhibitor in particular.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely,
(signed) SPYROS P. SKOURAS

"Motor Patrol" with Don Castle, Jane Nigh and Reed Hadley

(Lippert, June 6; time, 67 min.)

A good program action melodrama. Although produced on a modest budget, the picture has been given the care usually accorded to much bigger productions. The direction is so good that one feels as if seeing a real-life occurrence. The hit-and-run scene, where the police officer is killed, is realistic. The methods the police authorities employ to trap the crooks are believable. The photography is sharp and clear:—

Called to the scene of a hit-and-run accident in which a man is killed, the police are unable to obtain a description of the murderer, but they learn that the dead man had been employed in a used car lot, where Jane Nigh is secretary to the owner. Jane makes a guarded telephone call to Charles Victor, head of a gang that was stealing cars, altering their appearance, and selling them at a good price. She informs him that the police were investigating the hit-and-run death. Meanwhile Reed Hadley, a plain clothes officer, checks a roadside cafe near where the dead man had been found and learns from Sid Melton, the proprietor, that the victim had been in an argument on the night of the murder. While Hadley investigates, Jane and Victor arrive. Victor departs

hastily in Jane's car, a stolen one, and Bill Henry, a motorcycle cop, gives chase, killing himself when Victor swerves suddenly and causes him to crash into the stopped car. Don Castle, a rookie cop engaged to Gwen O'Connor, Henry's sister, asks to be assigned to the case and gets his wish. Presenting himself to Victor as the representative of a big Chicago car-stealing outfit, Castle wins his confidence and learns much about his operations. But he is exposed as a police officer when the man he was impersonating shows up. Castle starts to fight it out with the crooks just as the police close in on the gang's lair. Victor escapes, but Castle grabs a motorcycle and goes after him. Victor attempts the same maneuver that killed Henry, but Castle, alert, swerves aside while Victor goes to his death when his car plunges over a cliff.

Barney Sarecky produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it, from an original story by Maurice Tombragel, and a screen play by the author in collaboration with Orville Hampton.

No sex situations are shown.

"The Torch" with Paulette Goddard and Pedro Armendariz

(Eagle-Lion, June; time, 83 min.)

A mixture of war and love, "The Torch" is a refreshing picture in many ways because the story is not of the ordinary run, but on the whole it misses fire. On the credit side, are the exceptionally fine photography, enhanced by the actual, colorful Old Mexican backgrounds; the thrilling fast action, resulting from troop movements of revolutionists; the human interest touches in the story; and the impressive acting of most of the players. On the debit side, are the story's rapidly fluctuating moods, ranging from strong drama to broad comedy, which are disconcerting to the spectator. Another handicap is the unrestrained acting of Paulette Goddard, as a Mexican spitfire who treats the powerful revolutionary general with roughness and contempt; her performance, unlike those of the others, lacks conviction. Pedro Armendariz is believable and impressive as the love-bitten general, and Gilbert Roland is dignified as the Catholic priest. Margarita Luna provokes much laughter as the general's eager aide. The picture was produced in Mexico:—

When his Mexican revolutionary army takes over the town of Cholula after driving out the Federal troops, Armendariz orders his soldiers to round up the town's wealthy men, so that he might compel them to contribute to the revolutionary cause. Among these are Julio Villareal, the town's top aristocrat, father of Paulette; Walter Reed, an American doctor engaged to Paulette; and Gilbert Roland, the village priest, an old friend of the general. Villareal, standing on his dignity, refuses to cooperate with the general and is imprisoned. The general, encountering Paulette, makes a complimentary remark to a subordinate about her figure. She overhears the comment and slaps him. Impressed by her beauty and spirit, Armendariz determines to marry her, in spite of the fact that she is engaged to marry Reed. To impress her, he releases her father from prison, then asks permission to call on her, but she refuses. He starts a campaign of letters, flowers and gifts, but Paulette continues to look down upon him because of his peasant birth. She slaps him when he accosts her on the street. Infuriated, he knocks her to the ground, telling her that, if not for her noble birth, she would have been no different from the women camp followers of his army. When an influenza epidemic strikes the town, Paulette and her father prepare to leave, but, when she sees the inferior women doing their best to care for the sick and dying, she decides to offer her help. She becomes a gallant nurse and, despite her efforts to save the general's little foster daughter, the child dies. Armendariz and Paulette are drawn together by their mutual grief. The epidemic is eventually conquered and, on the day of Paulette's marriage to Reed, word comes that Federal troops were approaching the town. Armendariz, unwilling to subject the town to the ravages of war, orders his men to retreat. In the middle of the marriage ceremony, Paulette awakens to the fact that she loves the general. She abandons Reed at the altar, rushes to overtake Armendariz, and becomes his camp follower.

It was produced by Bert Granet and directed by Emilio Fernandez, from an original screen play by Inigo de Martino Noriega and the director.

Suitable for the family.

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DO YOUR PART IN THE TAX FIGHT!

Meeting in New York on Wednesday of this week, the Tax and Legislation Committee of COMPO, following the mandate of the organization at its recent Chicago session, put into gear the machinery of the national drive for full repeal of the twenty per cent Federal admissions tax. The plans set in motion by the committee call for the continuation and intensification of the fight for complete repeal. "This fight," declared Abram F. Myers, chairman of the committee, "must go on and on until the last penny of tax on a motion picture ticket is removed."

In a statement issued to the press at the close of the meeting, the committee revealed that it had launched a coast-to-coast survey, with the cooperation of the distributors, to gather up-to-date information on the state of the nation's theatres. This survey disclosed that, since the Tax Committee presented the industry's case to the House Ways and Means Committee two months ago, there has been a further decline in theatre attendance. This fact, supported by figures on closed theatres, suspended matinees, limited days of operation, etc., will be conveyed to the Ways and Means Committee in a last-ditch effort to prove that the fifty per cent cut in the tax tentatively voted by it will not give the industry the relief it must have. It will be pointed out that, while full repeal would mean a re-birth of business, a mere cut to a ten per cent admissions tax will bring about very little improvement in theatre attendance.

A time-table of action has been set up by the COMPO Committee, based on the probable actions of Congress. While continuing its effort—through personal contacts—to change the stand taken by the Ways and Means Committee, the COMPO Committee realistically is setting its sights on the possibility that the House Committee will probably report out a tax bill with the ten per cent levy remaining on tickets. In that eventuality, the time-table calls for a determined effort to be made to have the bill amended on the floor of the House to provide complete repeal. This, however, is doubtful, since the bill may reach the House under a rule preventing amendments.

That being the case, the next step on the time-table, assuming passage of the bill by the House, will be an attempt to have the Senate Finance Committee revise the House bill to include full repeal. There are only thirteen members on the Senate Finance Committee, and a pin-pointed, personalized effort will be made to convince those Senators that the industry must have and the public demands full repeal. If the bill should go through the Senate Finance Committee without providing for full repeal, efforts will be made to have it amended when it reaches the Senate floor, a method that is possible under Senate procedure.

The time-table includes other steps from there on, up to and including appeals to the President not to veto the bill.

According to the COMPO Committee, information has reached it indicating that the House Ways and Means Committee is trying to speed up the writing of its bill, and that it may be completed within a week or ten days.

The COMPO Committee announced also that, in the event the Senate Finance Committee holds public hearings, Chairman Myers and Gael Sullivan, of TOA, will appear to present new and telling data on how badly the industry needs the full tax relief.

A series of information and campaign bulletins is being prepared by the COMPO Committee for the guidance of the industry as a whole. In some areas, theatres will be requested to put on patron-protest campaigns, with trailers, cards, petitions, etc., asking unconvinced Senators to support the industry's plea. In other areas, where Senators are definitely committed to full repeal, it will be suggested that lobby posters as well as film on the screen proclaim that those Senators are on our side. This procedure proved to be popular among the Congressmen who pledged themselves to total repeal and felt that some appreciation should be forthcoming.

Queried about the industry's chances of winning complete repeal, Chairman Myers had this to say:

"There is still a chance that we can persuade Congress to remove the twenty per cent entirely; there is a chance because justice and right are on our side. We are continuing to do everything possible to present our case properly. Of course, the national committee cannot do it alone. Every person in the industry who knows a Senator should talk or write to that Senator, setting forth the dire need for this tax repeal. If the thousands of exhibitors who are suffering most will tell their Senators their own stories in their own words, it will be most effective."

Mr. Myers' statement needs no further elucidation; it speaks for itself.

EXHIBITORS PLAYING PUBLIC RELATIONS SHORTS TO GET LAST FOUR SUBJECTS FREE

Exhibitors who are participating in the industry's "Movies and You" short subjects film project will receive the last four subjects rental free, according to an announcement by William L. Ainsworth and Joseph R. Vogel, chairman and treasurer, respectively, of the all-industry Board of Trustees administering the public relations undertaking.

Francis S. Harmon, secretary of the Board of Trustees, states that more than 13,000 theatres have already booked and paid for the first six films in the series of twelve, and all are expected to play the next two rental subjects, namely, "Screen Actors," which went into release on May 13, and "Moments in Music," set for release on July 15. Both are being distributed through Loew's.

Mr. Harmon pointed out that sufficient revenue is expected from rentals on the first eight subjects to cover the cost of the entire series of twelve.

The last four subjects, which will be released at 60-day intervals starting September 14, will be supplied gratis to exhibitors who have booked and paid for the shorts released previously. The qualifying list of theatres entitled to these free subjects will be made up from Loew's booking chart on "Screen Actors" and Moments in Music."

The free subjects are "The Costume Designer," to be released by RKO in September, 1950; "The Screen Writer," through 20th Century-Fox, in November, 1950; "The Cinematographer," through Paramount, in January, 1951; and "The Screen Director," through Warner Bros., in March, 1951.

"Devil's Doorway" with Robert Taylor, Louis Calhern and Paula Raymond

(MGM, July; time, 84 min.)

The suffering of the American Indians when the white settlers started to take over their lands in the West is told with considerable effect in this outdoor melodrama, but many movie-goers, particularly the action fans, may find it too slow and tragic for their taste. Much sympathy is felt for the hero, an educated Indian, who, although a highly decorated Civil War veteran, is deprived of his property by the provisions of the homestead laws, and treated with contempt by greedy, prejudiced whites. Robert Taylor does a very fine job as the persecuted Indian; he cuts an heroic figure and makes the character a real and understandable man. Most of the excitement occurs in the closing reels, where Taylor and his followers engage in an all-out war against the white marauders in a determined effort to hold on to their lands. The picture ends on a tragic note, with Taylor and the other men of his tribe dying in a final skirmish with a troop of U. S. Cavalry:—

Taylor, a full-blooded Shoshone Indian, returns home to Medicine Bow, Wyoming, after distinguished service with the Union Army at Gettysburg and winning the Congressional Medal of Honor. He soon learns that his war record meant nothing to the white men in town, for they long resented the fact that he and his father (Fritz Lieber) owned rich grazing lands, accessible only through a jagged gap in the mountains. Taylor's success as a cattle-breeder is dimmed by the death of his father, who succumbs when the local white doctor delays coming to his aid. He becomes increasingly aware of public sentiment on his next cattle-selling trip to town, when he is refused service at the saloon and insulted by Louis Calhern, an Indian-hating lawyer, who tells him that his land will soon be taken over by sheepherders under a new homesteading law. Concerned, Taylor seeks the advice of Paula Raymond, an attractive new attorney in town, who agrees to handle his affairs and stakes a claim on the land he already owns. When official word arrives that Taylor, as an Indian, is not a citizen but a ward of the Government and cannot file a claim, he vows to hold on to his land regardless of the law. Paula, sympathizing with him, starts a petition to allow Taylor to keep at least a part of his land, but Calhern, who had arranged for sheepherders to migrate to Wyoming, stops the signing by revealing that Taylor had just shot one of their number. Egged on by Calhern, the sheepherders set out to take over Taylor's lands by force. This move gives rise to a bloody battle, with heavy losses on both sides and with Taylor eventually compelled to retreat with his tribesmen to his cabin, where a stockade is built hurriedly. Paula, who had summoned the cavalry, arranges with the sheepherders to hold their fire while she pleads with Taylor to give in, but he tells her that an Indian would rather be dead than without his land. The shooting resumes, and later, when the soldiers arrive and join the attack, Taylor agrees to surrender on condition that the women and children are escorted safely back to the reservation. This done, Taylor surrenders, dressed in his old cavalry uniform with one sleeve now empty. He salutes the soldiers and falls dead.

It was produced by Nicholas Nayfack and directed by Anthony Mann from a story by Guy Trosper. Suitable for the family.

"Return of the Frontiersman" with Gordon MacRae and Julie London

(Warner Bros., June 24; time, 74 min.)

Aside from the fact that it has Technicolor photography, this is no more than a routine western melodrama of program grade. Since it does have several exciting fights and chases, it may prove acceptable to juveniles and the avid, undiscriminating western addicts. Others, however, will probably be bored with it, for the script is as commonplace as they come, and somewhat muddled to boot. The direction and acting are ordinary, but neither the director nor the players

could do much with a script that is as undistinguished as this one. The title, incidentally, has little relation to the story. The photography is fine:—

Gordon MacRae, son of Jack Holt, the sheriff who had brought law and order to the wild town of Laramie, Wyoming, gets into a saloon brawl with Ed Rand. Holt fines and sentences them to several days in jail, despite the protest of Rory Calhoun, the local newspaper editor, who claimed that MacRae had caught Rand cheating at cards. Shortly after both are released from jail, Rand is shot dead just as MacRae passes his cabin on the road. Aware that he will be blamed for the shooting, MacRae flees, but his father forms a posse and captures him. Taken back to jail to stand trial, MacRae, aided by Calhoun who slips him a gun, escapes, but is wounded in the process. He falls unconscious in a hayloft, during which time the local bank is robbed by a gang whose leader wore clothes just like those worn by MacRae, and whose horse was similar. MacRae, regaining consciousness, makes his way to the local doctor and, under threat of harming Julie London, his niece, compels him to take out the bullet. He then learns for the first time that he was suspected of the bank robbery. He flees into the hills, taking Julie along as hostage to make sure that the doctor will not spread the alarm. He tries to convince her of his innocence, but to no avail. Later, however, when both witness a stage holdup by the gang whose leader was dressed like MacRae, Julie believes him and determines to help him clear himself. With Julie's aid, MacRae manages to capture the man who was impersonating him, but the fellow is shot dead by a mysterious marksman before MacRae can bring him into town. In the complicated events that follow, MacRae comes across evidence proving that Calhoun, his supposed friend, was the man who had engineered the crimes charged against him. This leads to a fight between Calhoun's outlaws and the forces of law, with MacRae and his father fighting shoulder to shoulder until the outlaws are subdued. With his name cleared, MacRae prepares to marry Julie.

It was produced by Saul Elkins and directed by Richard Bare, from a screen play by Edna Anhalt.

Harmless for the family trade.

"Mystery Street" with Ricardo Montalban, Sally Forrest and Bruce Bennett

(MGM, July; time, 93 min.)

A pretty good murder melodrama. What makes it more interesting than the usual crime picture is the way in which the spectator is taken behind the scenes and shown the different scientific methods employed by Harvard University's famed Department of Legal Medicine in crime detection work. In this case human bones and a few strands of hair are the only clues provided to the Department, yet by reconstructing the bones to form a skeleton it is able to establish the approximate date of death, the cause, and eventually the victim's identity. All this is so absorbing that one feels as if watching the actual solution of a crime. Aside from the crime detection techniques, the story offers considerable excitement and suspense in its depiction of the plight of a young married man who is jailed for the murder, though innocent. The manner in which the real culprit is found out and captured is a bit too patly contrived, but this is a minor flaw in the generally well written story. Ricardo Montalban is effective as the detective assigned to the case. A most colorful characterization is provided by Elsa Lanchester, as a greedy, blackmailing landlady:—

Briefly, the story revolves around the murder of Jan Sterling, a B-girl in a cheap Boston cafe, by a married Cape Cod socialite who had been running around with her. Her body, hidden on a sandy beach, is not discovered until three months later, when nothing more than human bones are found. Montalban, assigned to the case, takes the bones to Bruce Bennett, head of the Harvard Department of Legal Medicine, and together they establish her identity and pin the murder on Marshall Thompson, a young married man she had picked up on the night of her murder, and whose

car she had stolen in order to meet the socialite. Thompson had lied about the manner in which his car had been stolen lest his wife Sally Forrest, learn that he had been out with Jan. In the events that follow, Elsa Lanchester, Jan's landlady, learns of her affair with the socialite and attempts to blackmail him. This leads to her own murder by Edmon Ryan, the socialite, when he tries to recover the murder gun, which Elsa had stolen from him. In the end, Montalban traps Ryan, clearing young Thompson.

It was produced by Frank E. Taylor and directed by John Sturges from a screen play by Sydney and Richard Brooks, based on a story by Leonard Spigelglass.

Adult fare.

"In a Lonely Place" with Humphrey Bogart and Gloria Grahame

(Columbia, July; time, 94 min.)

Although it is a first-rate production from the viewpoint of direction, acting, photography and settings, the appeal of this melodrama will probably be limited to sophisticated picture-goers. It is hardly an entertainment for the masses, for the hero is an erratic character and often resorts to violence, at times with justification, but at other times without it. For this reason he does not win the spectator's sympathy. There are tense dramatic moments, for the hero is suspected of a murder he had not committed and is plagued by police efforts to pin the guilt on him. Humphrey Bogart turns in a compelling performance as the temperamental hero given to maniacal rages, as does Gloria Grahame, as the girl who falls in love with him only to leave him lest he bring her suffering and horror. It is a realistic ending, but hardly one that will please the average movie-goer. Some comedy relief is furnished by that fine actor, Robert Warwick, as a faded but cultured screen star addicted to drink:—

Bogart, a screen writer who had no patience with trite stories, meets Art Smith, his agent, in a fashionable Hollywood restaurant and agrees to take a scription job on a popular novel. Unable to stand the thought of reading the trashy novel, Bogart asks Martha Stewart, the hat check girl, who had read the book, to accompany him to his apartment to tell him the story briefly. After hearing the story from Martha, Bogart gives her cab fare to go home. Early the next morning he is awakened by Frank Lovejoy, a detective friend, who informs him that Martha had been murdered. He accompanies Lovejoy to headquarters, where his story that he had not left the apartment with Martha is doubted until corroborated by Gloria Grahame, his pretty neighbor, who could see into his apartment. Gloria and Bogart had never met formally, but once they begin to know each other they fall madly in love. She inspires him to take a new interest in his writing and helps him with the typing. Meanwhile he is somewhat annoyed by the fact that he, along with the dead girl's sweetheart, are still suspects. One day Gloria is summoned to headquarters for further interrogation, but she withholds this news from Bogart lest it upset him. He learns of it, however, from another source, and becomes so enraged that he drives off in his car at a dangerous speed and collides with another car. Still angered, he starts beating the other driver unmercifully. Gloria intervenes in time to save the man from certain death. Eventually calming down, Bogart apologizes to Gloria for losing his head and wins her consent to marry him that night. At a pre-wedding celebration prior to their departure for Las Vegas, Bogart again loses his temper over a minor matter, insulting Gloria and striking his agent. She rushes home. Bogart follows her to beg her forgiveness, but Gloria, now concerned over his violent temper and wondering whether he had not killed Martha, had already made arrangements to leave town. She feigns forgiveness to pacify him, but through a chance phone call from the airport he learns of her plans to leave him. His violent temper comes to the surface again and he starts to choke her, but he comes to his senses when the telephone rings again. Gloria answers it as Bogart walks out dejectedly, and learns from the police that Martha's boy-friend had

confessed to her murder. This good news has no effect on her, for Bogart's latest outburst had shattered her dreams.

Robert Lord produced it and Nicholas Ray directed it from a screen play by Andrew Solt, based on the novel by Dorothy B. Hughes.

Adult fare.

"The Jackie Robinson Story" with Jackie Robinson

(Eagle-Lion, May; time, 76 min.)

Very good! From its very first scene to its final fadeout, this factual dramatization of the career of Jackie Robinson, the famous baseball star of the Brooklyn Dodgers, holds one completely engrossed. Told in simple but effective terms, it is at once a thought-provoking and inspirational human interest drama, one that should win many more admirers for the remarkable Negro athlete, whose rise to fame in the organized baseball world, despite the prejudice displayed by officials, players and even the fans themselves, is an inspiring lesson in high courage, restraint and personal dignity, as well as a tribute to the democratic sportsmanship of the American public. It should be made clear that, though the picture has great social significance, it is at all times an entertainment of a quality that should give it popular appeal because it touches the heart. It will undoubtedly prove to be a huge box-office success, not only because of the picture's merits, but also because of the exceptional publicity breaks both Robinson and the picture have received in recent weeks in the national magazines.

The surprise of the picture is the fine job done by Robinson in portraying himself on the screen. He is not, of course, a polished actor, but under Alfred E. Green's finished direction, he comes through with a performance that is completely natural and appealing, speaking his lines clearly and facing the camera with nary a trace of self-consciousness. His performance would do credit to many a professional actor. An outstanding job is turned in Minor Watson, as Branch Rickey, president of the Dodgers, who defies the traditional ban against Negro ball players, and who guides Robinson through his trials and tribulations. Richard Lane, as a team manager, injects many humorous touches. Louise Beavers, as Jackie's mother, and Ruby Dee, as the girl he marries, lend just the right warmth and tenderness to their sympathetic roles.

Briefly, the rather episodic but well written story takes Robinson from childhood through his high school and college days, during which time he proves to be a prize athlete in all competitive sports, particularly baseball. To help support his mother, he quits college in his senior year to play pro-football. He enters the Army with the start of World War II, rising from private to lieutenant by the time he is honorably discharged. His efforts to secure work as an athletic instructor prove futile, but he eventually lands a job on an all-Negro baseball team. His fine work on the ball field comes to the attention of the Dodgers, and before long he is signed to a contract by Branch Rickey, who warns him of the problems he must overcome to remain in organized baseball. Assigned to play second base with Montreal, Robinson quickly proves his worth, but he is constantly subjected to the abuse of the heckling fans and of the players, including some of his own teammates. Although hurt and discouraged, he sticks to his promise to Rickey not to fight back either with words or fists, no matter how vicious the insults. In due time he wins a chance to play with the Dodgers and, despite opposition from some of the players, soon wins their respect as a ball player and a gentleman. The sportswriters vote him the "Rookie of the Year," and he goes on to help the Dodgers win two National League pennants.

Mort Briskin, the producer, Alfred E. Green, the director, and Lawrence Taylor and Arthur Mann, the screen play writers, deserve great credit for the masterful way in which they have presented Jackie Robinson's story. It is a picture that should be seen by everyone, and every exhibitor may well be proud to show it on his screen.

"Square Dance Katy" with Vera Vague, Virginia Welles and Phil Brito

(Monogram, March 25; time, 76 min.)

Inoffensive—it will startle nobody. The story is slow and at times tiresome. There are spots here and there that please, but there are not enough of them to put the picture over. As a matter of fact, the story is nothing more than a framework for some square dancing, and for some musical numbers in which several of the actors either play or sing with a band. Jimmie Davis, former Governor of Louisiana, appears with his Sunshine Band. Virginia Welles is winsome, and with better stories she should make herself popular. Not much can be said for Vera Vague, as a night-club hostess; her talk is inane. There is, in fact, too much talk. Despite its defects, however, the picture may prove suitable for small towns, particularly where there is a square-dancing craze:—

When Warren Douglas and Sheila Ryan, representatives of a soap manufacturing company, go to a rural community in search of talent for the company's new television show, they are met by Virginia Welles, who believes that Phil Brito and his hill-billy band are entitled to a break in television. Douglas meets Brito, but he is impressed by Virginia's singing more than by Brito's band. Shortly thereafter, Virginia is summoned to star in the company's television show. While in New York, she looks around with the hope of finding a spot for Brito. She finds one at a Greenwich Village night-club operated by Vera Vague. Virginia becomes an immediate hit. Brito gets along fairly well, but he feels that, if he had a chance to give a big concert, he would fare better. He soon disappears and later is found by Sheila at a seaside resort, where he had won great popularity among square-dancing 'teen-agers. Virginia persuades him to return to the big town. He takes his band to Vera's place, where he becomes a sensation. It ends with his teaming up with Virginia for life.

Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it, from a screen play by Warren Wilson.

Good for the family trade.

"Fortunes of Captain Blood" with Louis Hayward and Patricia Medina

(Columbia, June; time, 91 min.)

A pretty good swashbuckling melodrama, of the blood-and-thunder type. Perhaps the limited budget handicapped the director, but whatever the cause, the direction does not seem to be of the best. Most of the exciting action takes place at the finish, during the battle between the pirate frigate and the ship of the King of Spain. The action is pretty slow in the beginning, but as the story progresses it manages to hold one in suspense, particularly because of the danger to the hero who, disguised as a fruit peddler, goes ashore in an effort to liberate a boatload of his men, who had been captured and sold as slaves. The acting is so-so, and the romance is fairly interesting. The story has been founded on the late Raphael Sabatini's novel "Captain Blood," produced twice before—once by Vitaphone, in the silent days, and once by Warner Bros., as a talkie. The story, however, has been altered considerably:—

Louis Hayward, commander of a buccaneer ship preying on shipping in the West Indies, is short of supplies. He is tricked into sending a boatload of his men ashore by Lowell Gilmore, a rascal in the pay of George Macready, a nobleman, who had been ordered by the King of Spain to capture Hayward lest he (Macready) be stripped of his title. The men are captured and imprisoned, but one manages to escape and inform Hayward. To effect the liberation of his men, Hayward goes ashore and disguises himself as a fruit peddler. In the course of events, he meets Patricia Medina, Macready's niece, who is intrigued by him. He learns that she is unhappy on the island and that she had been begging Gilmore to spirit her away and send her back to Spain. Gilmore captures Hayward and prepares to kill him just as

Macready's guards approach him (Gilmore) for keeping a forbidden rendezvous with Patricia. Hayward helps Gilmore to repulse the guards and escapes with him and Patricia to a disreputable inn, where they outwit the guards again. In the excitement, Hayward hides Patricia's jewels. Gilmore, finding that Patricia no longer has her jewels, loses interest in her. Hayward returns her jewels and promises to take her away in his ship if she could have her uncle pardon him. That night, Hayward steals into Macready's private office, takes hold of an official seal, and forges a pardon for his men, who were held as slaves. Hayward and his men get by all but the last guard, who notices that the wrong seal had been used on the forged pardon. A fight ensues, but Hayward and his men manage to escape and reach their ship. Soon after, Macready's ship moves into sight to give battle. Aware that he had no chance against Macready's powerful guns, Hayward orders his men to abandon ship, leaving two men to fire the guns and spike them. Macready, believing that his guns had subdued the pirates, goes to the buccaneer ship in a small boat to obtain Hayward's surrender. Meanwhile Hayward and his men swim to Macready's ship, hi-jack it, and train the guns on their own ship, killing Macready and most of his men. As he sets sail for new adventures, Hayward promises Patricia that he will one day return to her.

It was produced by Harry Joe Brown and directed by Gordon Douglas, from a screen play by Michael Hogan, Robert Libott and Frank Burt.

Unobjectionable for the family trade.

"State Penitentiary" with Warner Baxter

(Columbia, June 8; time, 66 min.)

For a low-bracket picture, "State Penitentiary" is very good. The results are owed to the good script and the expert direction. The action is realistic and the players enact their roles with force and conviction. Since there is hardly any comedy relief, it should be paired with a lighter picture in double-billing situations. Warner Baxter acts with restraint and wins the spectator's sympathy because, despite the danger of his being accused of infractions of the prison rules and the law, he does not "squeal." The action, at times, is thrilling. The photography is sharp and clear:—

Although innocent, Baxter, an aviation engineer, is sent to prison for embezzling four hundred thousand dollars from stockholders. Onslow Stevens, a Federal agent, continues to pursue Baxter in the belief that he could tell him where he hid the money. Stevens attempts to obtain the information also from Karin Booth, Baxter's beautiful wife, but to no avail. Karin and Baxter begin to suspect Robert Shayne, Baxter's partner, because he had not defended Baxter at the trial as vigorously as Baxter had a right to expect. Karin decides to go to Florida, where Shayne now resided, in the hope of learning something from him. Meanwhile Baxter gets in bad with a gang of prisoners when he helps quell an uprising, and he is "ridden" unmercifully. Stevens, unaware of the fact Karin was playing up to Shayne, hands Baxter a newspaper clipping stating that Karin planned to divorce him to marry Shayne. Hoping to obtain a confession from Shayne, Baxter, too, decides to go to Florida. He assures Stevens and the warden that he will recover the money if they will free him for a few days. Unable to convince the two officials that his proposal was sincere, Baxter escapes and heads for Florida. En route, he is caught by Stevens and ordered back to prison, but Stevens relents when Baxter pleads for a chance to prove his innocence. The two continue to Florida together. They reach Shayne's home in time to catch him with the money and just as he was trying to subdue Karin, who was holding him at gun-point. Shayne again tries to escape, but Stevens and Baxter capture him. Having proved his innocence, Baxter is set free.

Sam Katzman produced it, and Lew Landers directed it, from a story by Henry E. Helseth, and a screen play by Howard J. Green, Robert Libott and Frank Burt.

Harmless for the family.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXXII

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No. 20

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Outcast of Black Mesa—Columbia (54 min.)	not reviewed
Perfect Woman, The—Eagle-Lion (87 min.)	70
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Rock Island Trail—Republic (90 min.)	72
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Run for Your Money, A—Univ.-Int'l (83 min.)	56
Secret Fury, The—RKO (86 min.)	67
Sierra—Univ.-Int'l (83 min.)	67
Six Gun Mesa—Monogram (57 min.)	not reviewed
Skipper Surprised His Wife—MGM (85 min.)	75
Sunset Boulevard—Paramount (110 min.)	63
Ticket to Tomahawk, A—20th Century-Fox (90 min.)	62
Torch, The—Eagle-Lion (83 min.)	76
Wabash Avenue—20th Century-Fox (92 min.)	51
Wagonmaster—RKO (86 min.)	55
Whipped, The—United Artists (89 min.)	50
Women from Headquarters—Republic (60 min.)	74

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Allied Artists Features

(1560 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

(Distribution through Monogram)

16 There's a Girl in My Heart—Knox-Bowman-Jean..Jan.

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

221 Jolson Sings Again—Parks-Hale	Feb.
232 Father Is a Bachelor—Holden-Gray	Feb.
228 The Nevadan—Scott-Malone	Feb.
231 Mark of the Gorilla—Weissmuller	Feb.
267 Trail of the Rustlers—Starrett (55 m.)	Feb. 2
213 Girls' School—Reynolds-Ford	Feb. 9
248 Mule Train—Gene Autry (70 m.)	Feb. 22
230 The Palomino—Courtland-Tyler	Mar.
206 Blondie's Hero—Singleton-Lake	Mar. 9
216 Bodyhold—Parker-Albright	Mar. 21
234 A Woman of Distinction—Russell-Milland	Apr.
236 Cargo to Capetown—Ireland-Crawford	Apr.
208 Tyrant of the Sea—Williams-Randell	Apr. 6
265 Outcast of Black Mesa—Charles Starrett (54 min.)	Apr. 13
210 Military Academy—10th Ave. Gang	Apr. 20
241 Frightened City—Keyes-Korvin-Bishop	May
235 Kill the Umpire—Bendix-Merkel	May
245 Cowtown—Gene Autry (70 m.)	May
203 Beauty on Parade—Hutton-Warrick	May 4
204 Customs Agent—Eythe-Reynolds	May 18
The Good Humor Man—Carson-Albright	June
Fortunes of Captain Blood—Hayward	June
Texas Dynamo—Charles Starrett	June 1
State Penitentiary—Baxter-Stevens	June 8
238 No Sad Songs for Me—Sullivan-Corey	Not set

Eagle-Lion Features

(165 West 46th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

108 The Third Man—Cotten-Valli-Welles	Jan.
943 Hit the Ice—reissue	Feb.
018 The Sundowners—Preston-Wills-Barrymore	Feb.
021 The Amazing Mr. Beecham—British cast	Feb.
022 Guilty of Treason—Bickford-Granville	Feb.
019 The Great Rupert—Durante-Moore	Mar.
023 The Golden Gloves Story—James Dunn	Mar.
024 Boy from Indiana—McCallister-Butler	Mar.
069 The Fighting Stallion—Edwards-Merrick	Mar.
070 Forbidden Jungle—Harvey-Taylor	Mar.
Kind Hearts & Coronets—British cast	Apr.
029 Kill or be Killed—Tierney-Colouris	Apr.
015 The Perfect Woman—British cast	Apr.
032 The Jackie Robinson Story—Robinson	May
027 The Winslow Boy—Donat-Hardwicke	May
107 The Fallen Idol—Richardson-Morgan	May
012 The Glass Mountain—Cortesa-Denison	May
056 Twin Beds—reissue	May
057 Getting Gertie's Garter—reissue	May
025 The Torch—Goddard-Armendariz	June
Eye Witness—Montgomery-Banks	June
High Lonesome—Barrymore-Wills	June
Timber Fury—Bruce-Lee	June
030 It's a Small World—Dale-Miller	June
The Blue Lamp—British cast	June
The Sun Sets at Dawn—Reed-Parr	July
Golden Salamander—British cast	July
Naughty Arlette—British cast	July
055 Up in Mabel's Room—reissue	July
054 Tillie's Punctured Romance—reissue	July
058 Abroad with Two Yanks—reissue	July
Destination Moon—Archer-Anderson	Aug.

Film Classics Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

The Flying Saucer—Conrad-Garrison	Jan. 10
Guilty Bystander—Scott-Emerson	Jan. 20
Cry Murder—Mathews-Lord	Feb. 3
Four Days Leave—Cornel Wilde	Feb. 10
The Vicious Years—Cook-Moore	Mar. 10
Rapture—Langin-Albiin	Apr. 5
Congolaise—Documentary	Apr. 17
Good Time Girl—British cast	May 11
Sudan—reissue	June 1
Arabian Nights—reissue	June 1

(Continued on next page)

One Night in the Tropics—reissue June 15
 Naughty Nineties—reissue June 15
 Captain Kidd—reissue June 30
 The Bridge of San Luis Rey—reissue June 30
 The Wind is My Lover—Linfors-Kent not set

Lippert-Screen Guild Features

(255 Hyde St., San Francisco 2, Calif.)

4902 Baron of Arizona—Price-Drew Mar. 4
 4919 Western Pacific Agent—Taylor-Ryan Mar. 17
 4927 Hostile Country—Ellison-Hayden Mar. 24
 4922 Everybody's Dancin'—Lane-Jackson Mar. 31
 4928 Marshal of Hellderado—Ellison-Hayden Apr. 21
 4910 Operation Haylift—Williams-Rutherford May 5
 4925 Colorado Ranger—Ellison-Hayden May 12
 4904 Rocketship XM—Bridges-O'Brian June 2
 4926 Crooked River—Ellison-Hayden June 9
 4923 Motor Patrol—Castle-O'Brian June 16
 4929 Fast on the Draw—Ellison-Hayden June 30
 4930 West of the Brazos—Ellison-Hayden not set

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

9 Intruder in the Dust—Brian Jarman, Jr. Feb.
 14 East Side-West Side—Stanwyck-Mason Feb.
 17 Blossoms in the Dust—reissue Feb.
 18 Key to the City—Gable-Young Feb.
 19 Nancy Goes to Rio—Sothorn-Powell Mar.
 20 Black Hand—Gene Kelly Mar.
 21 Conspirator—Robt. Taylor-Eliz. Taylor Mar.
 22 The Yellow Cab Man—Skelton-DeHaven Apr.
 23 Side Street—Granger-O'Donnell Apr.
 24 The Outriders—McCrea-Dahl-Sullivan Apr.
 25 The Reformer & the Redhead—Powell-Allyson May
 26 Please Believe Me—Kerr-Walker-Lawford May
 27 Shadow on the Wall—Sothorn-Scott May
 28 The Big Hangover—Johnson-Taylor May
 30 Father of the Bride—Tracy-Bennett-Taylor June
 31 Skipper Surprised His Wife—Walker-Leslie June
 29 The Asphalt Jungle—Hayden-Hagen June
 32 The Happy Years—Stockwell-Hickman July
 33 Duchess of Idaho—Williams-Johnson July
 34 Devil's Doorway—Robert Taylor July
 35 Mystery Street—Montalban-Forrest July
 36 Three Little Words—Astaire-Skelton-Ellen Aug.
 38 The Miniver Story—Garson-Pidgeon Aug.
 37 Lady Without Passport—Lamar-Hodiak Aug.

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

4911 Joe Palooka Meets Humphrey—Kirkwood Feb. 5
 4913 Blonde Dynamite—Bowery Boys Feb. 12
 4925 West of Wyoming—J. M. Brown (57 m.) Feb. 19
 4902 Young Daniel Boone—Bruce-Miller Mar. 5
 4952 Over the Border—J. M. Brown (58 m.) Mar. 12
 4907 Killer Shark—Roddy McDowall Mar. 19
 4922 Square Dance Katy—Jimmy Davis Mar. 25
 4941 Gun Slingers—Whip Wilson (55 m.) Apr. 9
 4926 Mystery at the Burlesque—English cast Apr. 16
 4909 Jiggs & Maggie Out West—Yule-Riano Apr. 23
 4951 Six Gun Mesa—J. M. Brown (57 m.) Apr. 30
 4917 Father Makes Good—Walburn May 7
 4914 Lucky Losers—Bowery Boys May 14
 4923 The Silk Stocking Murder—Carole Landis
 (formerly "The Noose") May 28
 4912 Humphrey Takes a Chance—Kirkwood June 4
 4924 Side Show—McGuire-Roberts June 18
 4905 Bomba and the Lost Volcano—Sheffield June 25
 4919 Snow Dog—Kirby Grant July 16
 4903 County Fair—Calhoun-Nigh July 23

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

4911 Captain China—Russell-Payne-Russell Feb.
 4912 Dear Wife—Caulfield-Holden Feb.
 4913 So Proudly We Hail—reissue Mar.
 4914 Wake Island—reissue Mar.
 4915 Paid in Full—Scott-Cummings-Lynn Mar.
 4921 Lives of a Bengal Lancer—reissue Mar.
 4920 Beau Geste—reissue Mar.
 4917 Riding High—Crosby-Gray-Gleason Apr.
 4918 Captain Carey, U.S.A.—Ladd-Hendricks Apr.
 4919 No Man of Her Own—Stanwyck-Lund May
 4916 Eagle & the Hawk—Payne-Fleming-O'Keefe June
 4922 My Friend Irma Goes West—Wilson-Lynn July
 4923 The Lawless—Carey-Russell July
 4926 The Furies—Stanwyck-Huston Aug.
 4927 Sunset Boulevard—Swanson-Holden Aug.

RKO Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

068 Bride for Sale—Colbert-Brent-Young
 014 A Dangerous Profession—Raft-Raines-O'Brien
 013 Holiday Affair—Mitchum-Leigh
 015 The Threat—O'Shea-McGraw-Gray
 016 Riders of the Range—Tim Holt (61 m.)
 052 My Foolish Heart—Hayward-Andrews
 094 Cinderella—Disney
 017 Woman on Pier 13—Day-Ryan
 (formerly "I Married a Communist")
 069 Man on the Eiffel Tower—Tone-Laughton
 070 Stromboli—Ingrid Bergman
 019 Storm Over Wyoming—Tim Holt (60 m.)
 018 The Tattooed Stranger—Miles-White
 020 Tarzan and the Slave Girl—Barker-Darcel
 073 The Capture—Wright-Ayres
 074 Wagonmaster—Johnson-Drew
 022 Dynamite Pass—Tim Holt (61 m.)
 021 The Golden Twenties—Documentary
 The Secret Fury—Colbert-Ryan

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

4962 Gun Man of Abilene—Allan Lane (60 m.) Feb. 6
 4910 Tarnished—Patrick-Franz Feb. 28
 4909 Singing Guns—Monroe-Raines-Brennan Feb. 28
 4905 Sands of Iwo Jima—Payne-Agar Mar. 1
 4906 Belle of Old Mexico—Patrick-Rockwell Mar. 1
 4911 Federal Agent at Large—Patrick-Rockwell Mar. 12
 4972 The Vanishing Westerner—Hale (60 m.) Mar. 21
 4942 Twilight in the Sierras—Rogers (67 m.) Mar. 22
 4912 House by the River—Hayward-Wyatt Mar. 25
 4963 Code of the Silver Sage—Lane (60 m.) Mar. 25
 4913 Harbor of Missing Men—Denning-Towne Mar. 26
 4961 The Arizona Cowboy—Rex Allen (67 m.) Apr. 1
 Woman from Headquarters—
 Huston-Rockwell May 1
 Hills of Oklahoma—Rex Allen May 1
 4964 Salt Lake Raiders—Lane May 1
 4914 Rock Island Trail—Tucker-Mara May 18
 4917 The Savage Horde—Elliott-Booth May 22
 4918 Destination Big House—Patrick-Rockwell June 1
 The Avengers—Carroll-Mara June 26
 Trigger, Jr.—Roy Rogers June 30
 Covered Wagon Raid—Lane June 30

Selznick Rel. Org. Features

(400 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.)

The Fallen Idol—British cast Nov.
 The Third Man—Welles-Valli-Cotten Feb.

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

003 When Willie Comes Marching Home—Dailey Feb.
 004 Twelve O'Clock High—Gregory Peck Feb.
 005 Dakota Lil—Montgomery Windsor Feb.
 006 Mother Didn't Tell Me—McGuire-Lundigan Mar.
 008 Under My Skin—Garfield-Prelle Mar.
 009 Cheaper by the Dozen—Webb-Crain-Loy Apr.
 010 Wabash Avenue—Grable-Mature Apr.
 007 Three Came Home—Colbert-Knowles Apr.
 012 The Big Lift—Clift-Douglas May
 011 A Ticket to Tomahawk—Baxter-Dailey May
 013 Night and the City—Tierney-Widmark June
 016 Love That Brute—Douglas-Peters June
 015 The Gunfighter—Gregory Peck July
 017 Where the Sidewalk Ends—Andrews-Tierney July
 018 Stella—Sheridan-Mature-Wayne Aug.
 019 The Black Rose—Power-Aubrey-Welles Aug.
 020 The Caribou Trail—Randolph Scott Aug.
 014 Broken Arrow—Stewart-Paget not set

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

Johnny Holliday—William Bendix Feb. 17
 The Girl from San Lorenzo—Renaldo-Carrillo Feb. 24
 Love Happy—Marx Bros.-Massey Mar. 3
 The Great Plane Robbery—Tom Conway Mar. 10
 Quicksand—Rooney-Bates Mar. 24
 Champagne for Caesar—Colman-Holm Apr. 7
 D.O.A.—Edmund O'Brien Apr. 21
 Johnny One-Eye—O'Brien-Morris-Moran May 5
 So Young, So Bad—Henreid-McLeod May 19
 The Whipped—Duryea-Storm-O'Shea June 2
 Iriquois Trail—Montgomery-Marshall June 16

The Men—Brando-Wright July
 Once a Thief—Romero-Havoc-McDonald July
 Ellen—Young-Drake-Sutton July
 If This Be Sin—Loy-Cummins-Greene Aug.
 The Admiral Was a Lady—Hendrix-O'Brien Aug.

Universal-International Features

(445 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

909 Borderline—MacMurray-Trevor Feb.
 910 Francis—Donald O'Connor Feb.
 912 Buccaneer's Girl—DeCarlo-Friend Mar.
 911 The Kid from Texas—Murphy-Storm Mar.
 913 Outside the Wall—Maxwell-Basehart Mar.
 914 Ma & Pa Kettle Go to Town—Main-Kilbride Apr.
 915 One Way Street—Mason-Duryea-Toren Apr.
 916 Comanche Territory—O'Hara-Carey May
 917 I Was a Shoplifter—Brady-Freeman-King May
 918 Curtain Call at Cactus Creek—O'Connor-Arden June
 919 Sierra—Murphy-Hendrix June
 920 Spy Ring—Toren-Duff June
 921 Winchester '73—Stewart-Winters-Duryea July
 922 Peggy—Lynn-Coburn-Greenwood July
 923 Shakedown—Duff-Dow July
 905 Tight Little Island—British cast not set
 Adam and Evelyn—British cast not set

Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

915 Backfire—Mayo-MacRae-O'Brien Feb. 11
 905 Chain Lightning—Bogart-Parker Feb. 25
 916 Young Man With a Horn—
 Douglas-Bacall-Day Mar. 1
 917 Perfect Strangers—Rogers-Morgan Mar. 25
 918 Barricade—Clark-Massey-Roman Apr. 1
 919 Stage Fright—Wyman-Dietrich-Wilding Apr. 15
 920 The Daughter of Rosie O'Grady—
 Haver-MacRae Apr. 29
 921 The Damned Don't Cry—Crawford-Brian May 13
 922 Colt .45—Scott-Roman-Scott May 27
 923 Destination Tokyo—reissue June 3
 924 God Is My Co-Pilot—reissue June 3
 925 Caged—Parker-Moorehead June 10
 926 This Side of the Law—Lindfors-Smith June 17
 927 Return of the Frontiersman—McRae-London June 24
 928 Bright Leaf—Cooper-Bacall-Carson July 1

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

2607 Kangaroo Kid—Favorite (reissue) (7½ m.) Feb. 2
 2553 Candid Microphone No. 3 (10½ m.) Feb. 23
 2805 King Archer—Sports (9 m.) Feb. 23
 2856 It Was Only Yesterday—
 Screen Snapshots (10 m.) Mar. 9
 2503 Spellbound Hound—Jolly Frolics (7 m.) Mar. 16
 2608 Tom Thumb's Brother—
 Favorite (reissue) (7 m.) Mar. 23
 2806 The Rasslin' Match of the Century—
 Sports (9 m.) Mar. 30
 2857 Meet the Winners—Screen Snapshots Apr. 6
 2554 Candid Microphone No. 4 (10½ m.) Apr. 20
 2807 College Sports Paradise—Sports Apr. 20
 2857 Meet the Winners—Screen Snapshots
 (10 m.) Apr. 26
 2653 Village Barn—Cavalcade of B'way Apr. 27
 2609 The Wise Owl—Favorite (reissue) May 4
 2808 Clown Prince of Golf—Sports (8½ m.) May 25
 2858 Famous Cartoonists—Screen Snap. (9½ m.) May 25

Columbia—Two Reels

2405 Hugs and Mugs—Stooges (16 m.) Feb. 2
 2434 Calling All Curtains—Collins & Kennedy
 (reissue) (16 m.) Feb. 9
 2424 Hold That Monkey—Schilling & Lane Feb. 16
 2406 Dopey Dicks—Stooges (15½ m.) Mar. 2
 2414 Dizzy Yardbird—Joe Besser (16½ m.) Mar. 9
 2415 Marinated Mariner—Andy Clyde (16 m.) Mar. 30
 2140 Cody of the Pony Express—Serial (15 ep.) Apr. 6
 2407 Love at First Bite—Stooges May 4
 2425 Nursey Behave—Vera Vague May 11

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

W-138 Little Quacker—Cartoon (7 m.) Jan. 7
 W-139 Saturday Evening Puss—Cartoon (7 m.) Jan. 14
 S-155 Pest Control—Pete Smith (8 m.) Jan. 14
 T-115 Land of Tradition—Traveltalk (9 m.) Jan. 21
 S-156 Crashing the Movies—Pete Smith (8 m.) Jan. 28
 W-140 Why Play Leap Frog?—Cartoon (7 m.) Feb. 4

T-116 Colorful Holland—Traveltalk (9 m.) Mar. 4
 W-141 Texas Tom—Cartoon (7 m.) Mar. 11
 W-142 Jerry & the Lion—Cartoon (7 m.) Apr. 8
 S-157 Wrong Son—Pete Smith (11 m.) Apr. 8
 T-117 Pastoral Panoramas—Traveltalk (9 m.) Apr. 15
 W-163 The Uninvited Pest—Cartoon (reissue)
 (8 m.) Apr. 29
 S-158 Did'ja Know?—Pete Smith (8 m.) May 6
 Z-171 Screen Actors—Industry Short May 13
 T-118 Roaming Thru Michigan—Travel. (9 m.) May 20
 W-143 Ventriloquist Cat—Cartoon (7 m.) May 27

Paramount—One Reel

Z9-3 Breezy Little Bears—Champion (11 m.) Feb. 3
 K9-3 The Rhumba Seat—Pacemaker (10 m.) Feb. 10
 X9-5 Detouring Thru Maine—Screen Song (7 m.) Feb. 17
 R9-5 Wild Goose Chase—Spotlight (10 m.) Feb. 24
 P9-4 Quack-a-doodle-do—Noveltoon (7 m.) Mar. 3
 Z9-4 Cilly Goose—Champion (10 m.) Mar. 10
 E9-4 Gym Jam—Popeye (7 m.) Mar. 17
 X9-5 Shortenin' Bread—Screen Song (7 m.) Mar. 24
 P9-5 Teacher's Pest—Noveltoon (7 m.) Mar. 31
 Z9-5 Three Bears in a Boat—Champion (10 m.) Apr. 7
 R9-6 Start 'em Young—Spotlight (10 m.) Apr. 14
 K9-4 Sing Me Goodbye—Pacemaker (10 m.) Apr. 21
 X9-7 Win, Place & Showboat—Screen Song (6m.) Apr. 28
 Z9-6 Yankee Doodle Donkey—Champion (8 m.) May 5
 E9-5 Beach Peach—Popeye (7 m.) May 12
 X9-8 Jingle, Jangle, Jungle—Screen Song May 19
 P9-6 Tarts & Flowers—Noveltoon (7 m.) May 26
 R9-7 Down Stream Highway—Spotlight (7 m.) June 2
 P9-7 Ups an' Downs Derby—Noveltoon (7 m.) June 9
 E9-6 Jitterbug Jive—Popeye June 23
 X9-9 Heap, Hep Injuns—Screen Song June 30
 R9-8 To the Winner—Spotlight (10 m.) July 7
 P9-8 Pleased to Eat You—Noveltoon (7 m.) July 21
 X9-10 Gobs of Fun—Screen Song (7 m.) July 28
 R9-9 The Sporting Suwannee—Spotlight (10 m.) Aug. 4
 E9-7 Popeye Makes a Movie—Popeye Aug. 11
 P9-9 Goofy, Goofy, Gander—Noveltoon Aug. 18
 X9-11 Helter-Swelter—Screen Song Aug. 25
 R9-10 Operation Jack Frost—Spotlight Sept. 1
 P9-10 Saved by the Bell—Noveltoon Sept. 15
 X9-12 Boos in the Night—Screen Song Sept. 22
 E9-8 Baby Wants Spinach—Popeye Sept. 29

RKO—One Reel

04109 Pluto & the Gopher—Disney (7 m.) Feb. 10
 04306 Sports' Best—Sportscope (8 m.) Feb. 11
 04207 Auditions for August—Screenliner (9 m.) Feb. 24
 04703 How to Ride a Horse—
 Disney (reissue) (7 m.) Feb. 24
 04110 The Brave Engineer—Disney (8 m.) Mar. 3
 04307 New Zealand Rainbow—Sportscope (8 m.) Mar. 10
 04111 Crazy Over Daisy—Disney (6 m.) Mar. 24
 04112 The Wonder Dog—Disney (7 m.) Apr. 7
 04308 Horseshow—Sportscope (8 m.) Apr. 7
 04704 Funny Little Bunnies—Disney (reissue)
 (7 m.) Apr. 21
 04113 Trailer Horn—Disney (6 m.) Apr. 28

RKO—Two Reels

03504 Sunk By the Census—
 Ed. Kennedy (reissue) (18 m.) Jan. 13
 03403 Groan & Grunt—Comedy Special (17 m.) Jan. 20
 03703 High & Dizzy—Leon Errol (16 m.) Feb. 17
 03202 Pal, Canine Detective—My Pal (20 m.) Feb. 17
 03106 Expectant Father—This Is America (16m.) Mar. 3
 03404 Put Some Money in the Pot—
 Comedy Special (17 m.) Mar. 17
 03107 Rescue Squadron—This Is Amer. (16 m.) Mar. 31
 03801 Basketball Headliners of 1950 (17 m.) Apr. 21
 03108 Trading Post—This Is America (15 m.) Apr. 28

Republic—Two Reels

4982 Radar Patrol vs Spy King (12 ep.) Apr. 15

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

5002 The Fox Hunt (Talk, Magpies)—Terry. (7 m.) Feb.
 3002 From Jib to Topsail—Sports (9 m.) Feb.
 5022 What Happens at Night—Terry.
 (reissue) (7 m.) Feb.
 3051 Frolic in Sports—Sports (9 m.) Mar.
 5003 Better Late Than Never
 (Victor the Volunteer)—Terrytoon (7 m.) Mar.
 (Continued on next page)

7002 Red Ingle & His Gang—Melody (9 m.).....Mar.
 5004 Mighty Mouse in Anti-Cats—Terry. (7 m.)....Mar.
 5005 Aesop's Fables, Foiling the Fox—Terry (7 m.)...Apr.
 2051 Pattern of Progress—Adventure (8 m.).....Apr.
 5006 Dinky in the Beauty Shop—Terry. (7 m.)Apr.
 5023 Orphan Duck—Terrytoon (reissue) (7 m.)...May
 3003 Diving Maniacs—Sports (9 m.)May
 5007 A Merry Chase (Talk. Magpies)—
 Terry. (7 m.)May
 3004 Shooting the Rapids—Sports (10 m.)May
 5008 Dream Walking—Terrytoon (7 m.)May
 5024 Just a Little Bull—Terry (reissue) (7 m.).....June
 8001 Mid-West Metropolis—Specialty (9 m.).....June
 5009 Law & Order (Mighty Mouse)—Terry. (7 m.)..June
 3006 Action with Rod & Reel—SportJune
 5010 The Red Headed Monkey—Terrytoon (7 m.)..July
 8002 New York Philharmonic Orch.—Specialty
 (10 m.)July
 5011 Dingbat in All This & Rabbit Stew—Terry.
 (7 m.)July
 8003 Music of Manhattan—Specialty (10 m.)July
 5012 The Dog Show—Terrytoon (7 m.)Aug.
 7003 Skitch Henderson & Orch.—MelodyAug.
 5013 King Tut's Tomb (Talk. Magpies)—Terry.
 (7 m.)Aug.

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

Vol. 16 No. 1—Mid-Century: Half Way to Where—
 March of Time (17 m.)Feb.
 Vol. 16 No. 2—The Male Look—March of Time
 (16 m.)March
 Vol. 16 No. 3—Where's the Fire?—March of Time..April

United Artists—One Reel

Southern Acapella—Songs of America (9 m.)Jan. 27
 Memorable Gems—Songs of America (9 m.).....Mar. 17
 The Tradition—Songs of America (9 m.)Mar. 25
 Tunes That Live—Songs of America (9 m.).....Apr. 14
 Glory Filled Spirituals—Songs of America (10m.)..May 12

Universal—One Reel

5325 Barber of Seville—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)..Feb. 13
 5383 Dream Dust—Sing & Be Happy (10 m.)....Feb. 20
 5326 Mother Goose on the Loose—
 Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)Mar. 6
 5344 Progress Island—Variety Views (9 m.)....Mar. 13
 5384 Sing Your Thanks—
 Sing & Be Happy (10 m.)Apr. 3
 5327 Candyland—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)Apr. 10
 5328 The Beach Nut—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)..May 8
 5385 Harmony Hall—Sing & Be Happy (10 m.) ..May 29
 5329 Boogie Woogie Man—Cartune
 (reissue) (7 m.)June 12
 5330 Fish Fry—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)July 17
 5386 Melody Moods—Sing & Be Happy (10 m.)..July 17

Universal—Two Reels

5304 Ethel Smith & the Henry King Orch.—
 Musical (15 m.)Feb. 1
 5353 The Fargo Phantom—
 Musical Western (24 m.)Feb. 9
 5305 Sweet Serenade—Musical (15 m.)Mar. 1
 5354 Gold Strike—Musical Western (25 m.)....Mar. 30
 5306 Rustlers' Ransom—Musical (15m.)..Apr. 19
 5355 Rustlers' Ransom—Musical WesternMay 18
 5201 Thundering Rails—Special (19 m.)May 24
 5356 Western Courage—Musical WesternJuly 6
 5307 King Cole Trio—Musical (15 m.)not set

Vitaphone—One Reel

6604 Hands Tell the Story—Novelty (10 m.)....Feb. 4
 6403 So You Want to Throw a Party—
 Joe McDoakes (10 m.)Feb. 4
 6719 Mutiny on the Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)..Feb. 11
 6804 Bob Wills & His Texas Playboys—
 Melody Master (reissue) (10 m.)Feb. 11
 6505 That's Bully—Sports Parade (10 m.)Feb. 18
 6705 The Lion's Busy—Merry Melody (7 m.)....Feb. 18
 6306 The Sheepish Wolf—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)Mar. 4
 6706 The Scarlet Pumpnickel—
 Merrie Melody (7 m.)Mar. 4
 6605 Sitzmarks the Spot—Novelty (10 m.)Mar. 11
 6720 Homeless Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)Mar. 11
 6506 This Sporting World—
 Sports Parade (10 m.)Mar. 25
 6307 Double Chaser—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)Mar. 25
 6805 Hit Parade of Gay Nineties—
 Melody Master (reissue) (10 m.)Apr. 1

6707 Strife With Father—Merrie Melody (7 m.)...Apr. 1
 6404 So You Think You're Not Guilty—
 Joe McDoakes (10 m.)Apr. 17
 6708 The Hypo-Chondri-Cat—
 Merrie Melody (7 m.)Apr. 15
 6308 Fifth Column Mouse—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)Apr. 22
 6721 Big House Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)Apr. 22
 6507 Alpine Champions—Sports Parade (10 m.)..May 6
 6709 The Leghorn Blows at Midnight—
 Merrie Melody (7 m.)May 6
 6309 Inky & the Lion—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.).....May 20
 6710 Bitter Hare—Merrie Melody (7 m.)May 20
 6711 An Egg Scramble—Merrie Melody (7 m.)...May 27
 6806 Leo Reisman & Orch.—Melody Master
 (reissue) (10 m.)May 27
 6310 Tic, Toc, Tuckered—
 B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)June 3
 6508 Riviera Days—Sports Parade (10 m.)June 3
 6601 Horse & Buggy Days—Novelty (10 m.)....June 17
 6722 What's Up Doc?—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)June 17
 6712 All Abir-r-r-d—Merrie Melody (7 m.)June 24
 6807 Matty Malneck & Orch.—Melody Master
 (reissue) (10 m.)June 24
 6311 Booby Hatched—B. R. Cartoon (reissue)
 (7 m.)July 1
 6509 Racing Thrills—Sports Parade (10 m.)July 8
 6723 8-Ball Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)July 8
 6713 It's Hummer Time—Merrie Melody (7 m.) ...July 22
 6808 Cliff Edwards & His Buckeroos—Melody Master
 (reissue) (10 m.)July 22

Vitaphone—Two Reels

6104 Vaudeville Days—Featurette (20 m.)Feb. 25
 6004 Women of Tomorrow—Special (20 m.)...Mar. 18
 6005 Danger is My Business—Special (20 m.)...Apr. 8
 6105 Double Fool—Featurette (20 m.)Apr. 29
 6006 Pony Express Days—Special (20 m.).....May 13
 6007 Give Me Liberty—Special (20 m.)June 10
 6106 Just for Fun—Featurette (20 m.).....July 15
 6008 Sweden with Charlie McCarthy & Mortimer
 Snerd—Special (20 m.)July 29

NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

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 80 Mon. (E) ...May 22
 81 Wed. (O) ...May 24
 82 Mon. (E) ...May 29
 83 Wed. (O) ...May 31
 84 Mon. (E) ...June 5
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 86 Mon. (E) ...June 12
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 48 Tues. (E) ...June 13
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 50 Tues. (E) ...June 20
 51 Friday (O) ..June 23
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Universal News

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 353 Tues. (O) ..May 23
 354 Thurs. (E) ..May 25
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 358 Thurs. (E) .June 8
 359 Tues. (O) ..June 13
 360 Thurs. (E) .June 15
 361 Tues. (O) ..June 20
 362 Thurs. (E) .June 22
 363 Tues. (O) ..June 27
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News of the Day

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 276 Wed. (E) ..May 24
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 278 Wed. (E) ..May 31
 279 Mon. (O) ..June 5
 280 Wed. (E) ..June 7
 281 Mon. (O) ..June 12
 282 Wed. (E) ..June 14
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Paramount News

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 88 Sat. (E)June 24
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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
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Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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Vol. XXXII

SATURDAY, MAY 27, 1950

No. 21

EFFECTIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS WORK

On Friday evening, May 19, Allied Post No. 302, of the American Legion, gave at the Hotel Ambassador, in Los Angeles, its annual Americanism meeting, which was attended by about 600 Legionnaires and 200 Reserve Officers Training Corps cadets.

As in the past, Mr. Charles P. Skouras was co-sponsor of the meeting. George Murphy, the well-known and popular actor, was master of ceremonies.

High tribute was paid to Mr. Skouras by Mayor Fletcher Bowron and high-ranking officers of the American Legion for the fine work he has done in taking part in movements to promote the interests of the American people, particularly the young folk, and to strengthen patriotism in general.

There is no doubt that other exhibitors in different parts of the country either have sponsored similar meetings for a variety of worthy purposes, or have taken a leading part in them. And there is no doubt that the eulogies that were paid to Mr. Skouras were paid also to other exhibitors on similar occasions. These commendations cannot help benefitting the motion picture industry as a whole, for we thus make friends, and we need them. When men like Senator Edwin Johnson of Colorado introduce a bill in the Senate to control through a licensing procedure the moral conduct of film players and technicians, as well as the moral content of the films themselves, forgetting the fact that the motion picture industry has been one of the chief factors that helped the nation to reach its present greatness; when such men forget the fact that the American motion picture has shown people in every part of the world our democratic civilization, our progress in the arts and sciences; when men like him forget the services the motion picture industry has rendered to the nation in time of peace as well as in time of war—we need all the friends we can get.

Mr. Skouras, because of the unstinting way he gives of himself to further patriotic and humanitarian causes, can be compared to a one-man public relations organization, and the more we have like him, the better for us all.

And while we are handing out bouquets, let us not forget George Murphy. Mr. Murphy, like Mr. Skouras, is ever ready to take part in any movement the effect of which is to promote patriotism in any form. With his quiet dignity and his charming sense of humor, Mr. Murphy is a credit, not to his acting profession alone, but to the entire industry. He is the answer to the "slandrous" imaginings of men like Senator Johnson.

LANE ENTERPRISES
170 NASSAU STREET
NEW YORK 7, N. Y.

May 18, 1950

MR. PETER HARRISON
1270 Avenue of the Americas
New York 20, N. Y.

Dear Pete:—

Lately, whenever HARRISON'S REPORTS publishes an article of importance to the independent exhibitor, Mr. Spyros Skouras takes time out to reply in length. I have yet to see an independent exhibitor reply to Mr. Skouras' retorts.

In your issue of February 11, 1950, Mr. Skouras, at great length, objected to "A Guide to Theatre Budget Control" published January 14, 1950. He objects most vehemently to the 25% allocation for film rental, including shorts, and states that he is greatly alarmed about it for fear that some "gullible exhibitors around the country will jump at conclusions and will accept this as a yardstick based upon thorough investigation." Mr. Skouras feels, and so writes, that the budget published in HARRISON'S REPORTS makes "a

somewhat liberal allowance on other expenditures." He, of course, mentions the fact, "I have spent more years as an exhibitor than in my present field, which also includes the large responsibility in connection with the operation of quite a large circuit of theatres."

I have thoroughly investigated the budget control and note no "liberal allowances on other expenditures." Certainly, 5% for advertising, in the metropolitan area especially, is not a "liberal allowance" when you consider the many forms of advertising which are employed; such as, newspapers, mailing lists, billposters, etc. Is 21% for payroll a "liberal allowance?" I think not. In fact, I know it is not. Is 15% for rent a "liberal allowance?" Definitely not. Let Mr. Skouras ask his brothers, George and Charles, and the various film buyers in his enterprises whether 25% for film rental is not a good, fair, and substantial allowance. In fact, Mr. Skouras should ask his brothers how long their film buyers would remain in their employ if they went much above that figure, not mentioning if they ever go that high.

In your issue of May 4th, Mr. Skouras again took time out to reply to your editorial, "Let the Distributors Stop Penalizing the Exhibitor for His Showmanship Work," which appeared in HARRISON'S REPORTS of April 15, 1950. Of course, Mr. Skouras again mentions, "Therefore, as an old exhibitor I am dismayed by the philosophy put forth in your editorial by yourself and Colonel Cole asking for increased concessions in film rentals." What he particularly objects to, I believe, is the paragraph in your editorial which very plainly states that the present system of the sliding scale whereby the more the exhibitor takes in, the more he pays, is illogical. Does Mr. Skouras know (and I feel certain that he does) what the so-called sliding scale covers? If he doesn't, here's an example bearing out exactly the facts as Colonel Cole and you in your editorial so plainly stated:—

Gross	Percentage	Film Rental	Left to Exhibitor
\$4800	25%	\$1200	\$3600
5000	28%	1400	3600
5275	30%	1582	3693

and so on. Note that with the additional \$200 gross above the \$4800 the exhibitor receives nothing. Out of the additional gross of \$475 above the \$4800, the exhibitor received \$93.

Of course, Mr. Skouras is somewhat inconsistent in that same letter to you of May 4th. Here it is:— 20th Century-Fox's profits from film production were \$3,667,000 in 1947; \$3,768,000 in 1948 (an increase); and \$3,899,000 in 1949 (an increase again). Aggregate theatre profits were \$250,000,000 in 1947; \$200,000,000 in 1948 (a decrease); and \$175,000,000 in 1949 (another decrease and a tremendous one). Then Mr. Skouras states, "this is a lopsided situation." Ain't it the truth?

This industry is all wrong from Producer, Distributor, right down to the smallest independent Exhibitor. I have the solution. All we need to do is to take a page out of Pal Joe Stalin's book. When he and his boys took over Russia, an absolute monarchy for over 300 years, they found that some of the people had for so many years been imbued with the old thoughts and ideals, Joe Stalin took a short cut and "liquidated" the leaders. Possibly this Industry could also use this method. I don't mean the extreme manner of "liquidation" that Joe used, but there ought to be some other method of liquidating the leaders of thought in the almost absolute monarchy our industry has become in the past thirty years. Put on the side-lines all the old-timers in the producing, distributing and exhibiting ends of our business (and I am including myself because I, too, am an old-timer)

(Continued on back page)

"The Happy Years" with Dean Stockwell, Darryl Hickman and Scotty Beckett

(MGM, July; time, 110 min.)

Based on "The Lawrenceville School Stories" by Owen Johnson, this Technicolor production is a thoroughly enjoyable humorous story of school life in the 1890's, although it is a bit overlong. Dean Stockwell, that fine juvenile actor, is fascinating as the pivotal character, a cocky youngster with a penchant for getting into mischief, whose defiant attitude keeps him at constant odds with his schoolmates. The role gives him ample opportunity to demonstrate his versatility, and he comes through with flying colors. The picture teems with highly amusing episodes in the classroom, on the campus, and at home during vacation time. Although the emphasis is on the comedy, the picture has its serious side in the depiction of how the youngster, through the patience and understanding of his head master, warmly played by Leo G. Carroll, is made to recognize the meaning of honor and of his responsibility to the school, his classmates, and himself.

The story, which is episodic, shows Dean as the youngest son of a fairly well-to-do family, an incorrigible student who gets himself expelled from school for a second time when one of his pranks blows out the side of the classroom. His father (Leon Ames), threatening him with reform school, decides to give him one last chance—at Lawrenceville, the highly respected preparatory school near Princeton University. There, Dean's outspoken contempt for the school and his unwillingness to submit to the traditional razzing accorded new boys, marks him as a bad sport. Several of the boys think him cowardly, but they receive a rude awakening when, in one afternoon, he whips each of them. Flushed with success, he challenges Darryl Hickman, the school's football star, whom he considered his greatest enemy. Darryl knocks him cold, then offers to shake hands. When Dean refuses to shake hands with him, the rest of the boys decide to ostracize him. After a summer vacation at home with his family, Dean returns to school with two aims—to become more important than Darryl and, finally, to whip him. It is not until he is given a chance to play side by side with Darryl on the football team that Dean develops an understanding of getting along with others. The two boys become fast friends. Dean's pleasure at being accepted by his classmates is tempered, however, when he learns that Carroll had decided to give him a special examination in Latin. Realizing that failure could mean expulsion, Dean lays elaborate plans to cheat. Carroll, suspecting Dean's intentions, leaves the room during the test. Placed on his honor, Dean cannot bring himself to cheat and turns in a blank paper. He is shocked when Carroll takes the blank paper and gives him a passing mark as a reward for his honesty. Through Carroll's patience and understanding, Dean recognizes the error of his ways and acquires a new dignity.

It was produced by Carey Wilson and directed by William A. Wellman from a screen play by Harry Ruskin.

Excellent for the family.

"Good Time Girl" with an all-British cast

(Film Classics, May 11; time, 81 min.)

This British-made melodrama is a sordid, unpleasant tale about the downfall of a headstrong, delinquent girl of sixteen. If an American exhibitor were to disregard the moral content of the picture, and the fact that none of the players is known in the United States, he may book it, for the action is fast. The fact that the heroine is convicted of crimes she had not committed does not make the action pleasurable. Moreover, her failure to make an effort to become a useful member of society, and the sight of her tying up with criminal characters, is not edifying, either for youngsters or for oldsters. Jean Kent is good in the leading role, but the other players tend to overact, giving the production a quality that is reminiscent of the ten-twenty-three days. An attempt has been made to point up the story as a warning to juvenile delinquents, but the presentation is so superficial that it does not impress one. It is unfortunate that the son of Samuel Goldwyn, who is the associate producer, did not start his production career with better material:—

Jean Kent, employed as a pawnbroker's assistant, is caught by her employer as she tries to return to the safe a brooch she had borrowed to wear at a dance. The pawnbroker, rebuffed when he makes a dishonorable proposal to Jean, tells her father that she is a thief. Jean runs away from home after her father beats her, and she obtains lodgings in a cheap rooming house. There she becomes acquainted with

Peter Glenville, a slimy waiter, who gets her a job as a cloak-room attendant in a Soho night-club owned by Herbert Lom. Dennis Price, a pianist at the club, takes a kindly interest in her. One night Glenville attempts to seduce Jean and blackens her eye when she resists. Lom discharges Glenville, who vows vengeance on both. First, he tricks Jean into pawning some stolen jewelry for him, then he attacks Lom with a razor, slashing him. On the following day Jean is arrested for stealing the jewelry and, despite her story of innocence, is sentenced to three years in a wayward girls' institution. There she comes under the adverse influence of Jil Balcon, another wayward girl, and carries on a life of misconduct in the prison. Seven months later, she escapes during a prison revolt. She heads for London and goes to Lom, who, to get rid of her, introduces her to his fast set of friends. She takes up with Hugh McDermott, a black marketeer, but runs out on him when they become involved in a car crash, while drunk, killing a policeman. She then makes an allegiance with two American Army deserters, and the trio start on a life of hold-ups and beatings. With the newspaper headlines hampering their activities, the trio decide to stop a passing car, beat up the driver, and make a getaway. The driver turns out to be Price, who is shot to death by the deserters before Jean can warn him. The tumult attracts the police, and all three are arrested and sentenced to a long imprisonment.

It was produced by Sidney Box and directed by David MacDonald, from a screen play by the producer, Muriel Box and Ted Willis. Strictly adult fare.

"The Men" with Teresa Wright and Marlon Brando

(United Artists, July; time, 85 min.)

Stanley Kramer, who made his mark with "Champion" and "Home of the Brave," delivers another compelling drama in "The Men," the subject of which is paraplegics—war veterans who emerged from the conflict paralyzed from the waist down. It is a superior production, excellently written, directed and acted, and it will undoubtedly receive rave notices from the critics wherever it is shown, but just how it will fare at the box-office is difficult to ascertain, for the public has demonstrated its resistance to pictures with illness and disease. A case in point is the disappointing business being done by "No Sad Songs for Me," a fine picture, in which the heroine is a victim of cancer. "The Men" certainly deserves to be a box-office hit, for it is a profoundly moving drama that grips one's emotions from start to finish in its depiction of the heart-breaking problems faced by paraplegics in readjusting themselves to a new way of life.

Briefly, the main story revolves around Marlo Brando who, embittered over his physical helplessness, prefers to die. He refuses to see Teresa Wright, his loyal fiancée, but Teresa, with the aid of Everett Sloane, head doctor of the veteran hospital, persuades Brando to submit to therapy that would start him on the road to adjustment. The wedding of another paraplegic gives Teresa the opportunity to convince Brando that their marriage, too, was possible. Satisfied that Teresa wanted to marry him out of love and not pity, Brando sets a wedding date. On their wedding night, Teresa becomes ill at ease when the full realization of her responsibility dawns on her. Brando, misunderstanding her feelings, leaves in a rage and goes back to the hospital. Frustrated, he becomes moody and gets involved in several brawls, including a drunken escapade that results in his being expelled from the hospital by a veterans' disciplinary board. He appeals to Sloane to overrule the board, but Sloane refuses, pointing out that his attitude was all wrong and that he needed to be taught a lesson. Brando's predicament brings him to his senses, and he seeks out Teresa, who had begged him to return to her. With a better understanding of each other, they set out to make a new life for themselves.

A brief synopsis cannot do justice to the broader scope of the story which, for example, delves into the question of whether paraplegics can enjoy normal married lives and become fathers; examines the problems of other paraplegics; and probes into the reaction of Miss Wright's parents to the idea of her marrying a man who is destined to remain in a wheel chair for the rest of his life. As said, the performances are excellent, but top honors go to Everett Sloane for his superb characterization as the doctor. A good part of the film was shot at the Birmingham Veterans Administration Hospital, and the therapeutic methods employed to help the paraplegics are depicted in interesting detail.

It was produced by Stanley Kramer and directed by Fred Zinnemann from a story and screen play by Carl Foreman. The treatment is adult and frank.

"Night and the City" with Richard Widmark and Gene Tierney

(20th Century-Fox, June; time, 95 min.)

The seamy side of life in London is vividly and effectively depicted in this highly thrilling melodrama, which was produced in England. Although expertly directed and acted, it is not a picture that will appeal to the heart, but those who like their entertainment raw, tough and brutal should get much satisfaction out of it. The principal character, played by Richard Widmark, is an unscrupulous opportunist, and the other characters are generally of a low-life grade. Gene Tierney, as his girl-friend, is decent, but her part is relatively minor. The action is fast, and it is packed with so much excitement and suspense that it grips one from the start and never lets up. An outstanding sequence is where a no-holds-barred fight takes place in a wrestling ring between Stanislaus Zbyszko and Mike Mazurki; it is without question one of the most realistic and thrilling fights ever filmed. Zbyszko, incidentally, turns in a very fine performance in a highly sympathetic role. The actual London backgrounds, enhanced by the fine photography, are a definite asset:—

Widmark, a tout for a London night-club owned by Francis L. Sullivan, is full of wild schemes, most of which take the last penny of his girl-friend, Gene, a singer in the club. One day Widmark overhears Zbyszko, a famous wrestler just arrived from Athens, upbraid Herbert Lom, his son, for sponsoring fake wrestling matches in London. Thinking fast, Widmark makes friends with Zbyszko and, by sympathizing with his dislike for modern wrestling, wins his confidence as well as a partnership agreement to sponsor Ken Richmond, a young wrestler trained by Zbyszko. Widmark's secret aim was to wrest control of the wrestling game from Lom by capitalizing on his (Lom's) father's prestige. Through a series of unscrupulous moves Widmark secretly obtains the money needed for the venture from Googie Withers, Sullivan's unfaithful wife. Sullivan, learning of his wife's infidelity, maneuvers Widmark into a spot where, to save the venture, a match between Mike Mazurki, the champion, and Richmond was necessary. Knowing that Zbyszko would not permit Richmond to wrestle a man of Mazurki's low calibre, Widmark gets Mazurki drunk and provokes him into taunting Zbyszko. This leads to an impromptu fight in which Zbyszko thrashes Mazurki only to die from the terrific strain on his aged heart. Lom, holding Widmark responsible for his father's death, notifies the underworld to get Widmark. A man-hunt ensues, with Widmark coming to his end when Mazurki catches and strangles him, but before he dies he tries to make it appear as if Gene had revealed his whereabouts so that she might collect the money Lom had offered for his capture.

It was produced by Samuel G. Engel and directed by Jules Dassin from a screen play by Jo Eisinger, based on the novel by Gerald Kersh.

Adult fare.

"Bright Leaf" with Gary Cooper, Lauren Bacall and Patricia Neal

(Warner Bros., July 1; time, 110 min.)

The first-rate production values given to this adaptation of Foster Fitz-Simon's novel, and its colorful depiction of the growth of the tobacco industry in the late 1890's, make it a striking picture in many respects. On the whole, however, it is no more than a fairly interesting drama that will have to depend on the drawing power of the players. Adult in dialogue and in treatment, the picture is overlong, plot-heavy and slow-paced, and its theme of love and revenge somewhat unpleasant. Most of the characterizations, though interesting, are unsympathetic, for they are ruthless and motivated by vengeance. The performances are uniformly good, and there are a number of individual scenes that are outstanding, but there is so much plot and counterplot that, for the most part, the drama fails to come through on the screen with telling emotional impact:—

Excitement leaps high in the southern town of Kingsmont when Gary Cooper arrives; he and his tenant-farmer father had been driven out of town some years before by Donald Crisp, the biggest tobacco grower there, and Cooper had vowed to one day take possession of "Bright Leaf," Crisp's fabulous mansion, and to marry Patricia Neal's daughter, who had been forbidden to see Cooper. He finds an opportunity to buck Crisp when Jeff Corey asks him to finance a cigarette manufacturing machine. Cooper raises the needed money from Lauren Bacall, an old-time sweetheart and

operator of a "refined brothel," making her, Corey, and Jack Carson, a former medicine show man, his partners. The machine proves to be a huge success, and Cooper, through monopolistic methods, drives his competitors, including Crisp, out of business. Crisp fails in an attempt to kill Cooper, then commits suicide. He pursues Patricia and marries her, to the utter dismay of Lauren, who breaks with him. With "Bright Leaf" in his possession, and Patricia now his wife, Cooper sets out to gain control of the world's tobacco markets and rides roughshod over his own partners in the process. In due time his marriage turns out to be most unhappy, and he discovers that Patricia, to avenge her father's suicide, had provided the Government with information necessary to break his monopoly. Moreover, she had sold stock entrusted to her short, ruining him financially. He evicts her from "Bright Leaf," sets fire to the mansion, and lets it burn to the ground. He then turns to Lauren, but, when she tells him that she had lost all feeling for him, he rides off a dejected man.

It was produced by Henry Blanke and directed by Michael Curtiz from a screen play by Randal MacDougall.

Adult fare.

"Father Makes Good" with Raymond Walburn and Walter Catlett

(Monogram, May 7; time, 61 min.)

A mild program comedy, suitable chiefly for small towns. The story is lightweight, for it deals with the "exploits" of a mild-mannered cow. Good direction, however, enables it to provoke mild laughter in some of the situations. At any rate, it does not offend one's feelings even though it might tax one's intelligence. In crowded houses, it should take much better than in houses with empty seats. The photography is clear:—

When Raymond Walburn, a resident of a small town, learns from Walter Catlett, the Mayor, that the money collected for taxes on milk is to be spent on a golf course, he becomes so incensed that, to save the tax, he buys a milking cow for his family. This starts a series of complications, for the lowing noise of the cow disturbs the neighborhood. The Mayor, however, is unable to do anything about it, for there was no city ordinance against it. Meanwhile Cary Gray, Walburn's son, aided by George Nokes, the Mayor's son, milks the cow secretly and sells the milk to neighbors to collect enough money to buy a bicycle, which his father had refused to buy him for a birthday present. Meanwhile the Mayor, instead of fighting Walburn, decides to befriend him, hoping to induce him, through kindness, to sell the cow. He approaches Walburn and sells him the idea of delivering the 4th of July celebration address. Early on the morning of the 4th, Walburn thinks it is a good idea to fire the old cannon in the city park, but the cannon ball nearly hits Francis Ford, who had been fishing nearby. Ford goes gunning for Walburn, and the Mayor threatens Walburn with arrest for having broken the law unless, of course, he disposes of the cow. Walburn finds an excuse to sell the cow, making every one happy.

Peter Scully produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it, from a screen play by D. D. Beauchamp, who based it on his own story, "Journey at Sunrise," published in Good Housekeeping Magazine.

Harmless for the family.

"Curtain Call at Cactus Creek" with Donald O'Connor and Gale Storm

(Univ.-Int'l, June; time, 86 min.)

Photographed in Technicolor, "Curtain Call at Cactus Creek" is a lively and amusing mixture of slapstick, burlesque, songs and dances, revolving around the misadventures of a traveling theatrical company in the days of the wild and woolly West. Although it does have its dull moments here and there, the action for the most part is speedy, the characterizations amusing, and the comical mix-ups laugh-provoking. Donald O'Connor, as a one-man stage crew with ambitions to become an actor, is very good, and his innocent entanglements with a band of bank robbers will provoke much hearty laughter. Gale Storm, as his girl-friend, is appealing, and Eve Arden, as a fading musical comedy star, and Vincent Price, as a "ham" Shakespearean actor, make the most of their interpretations. The old vaudeville skits and the one-act melodramas put on by the troupe add much to the merriment. All in all, it is the kind of picture that helps one to pass the time quickly and pleasantly.

(ED. NOTE: The full review with synopsis and credits will be published next week.)

and bring in new blood; young people with new ideas who can be consistent and who will earn and deserve to remain in the Motion Picture Business.

Do we deserve to retain our investments? I wonder? Here's a clear example of inconsistency and sheer stupidity. We are wailing and complaining to the Congress of the United States to eliminate the 20% nuisance tax, and we promise to pass the saving on to the public. We promise the public that "Movies Are Better Than Ever." Now, how do we show our good faith? We play pictures such as RED DANUBE, CHICAGO DEADLINE, AMBUSH, GREAT GATSBY, MRS. MIKE, STROMBOLI, ROSEANNA McCOY, ALWAYS LEAVE THEM LAUGHING, INSPECTOR GENERAL and charge the regular admission prices (which are high) but we can't help it because our expenses are high, and of course, there is the 20% Federal Tax included in the price of the ticket. Finally, we come along with a good picture, SAMSON AND DELILAH. Here's a picture the public wants to see, and we should make it possible for them to see, and exert every effort for pictures such as SAMSON AND DELILAH to win the public back to us. But, what do we do? We immediately raise the admission prices on this picture and expect our patrons to come right in to our theatres the following weeks to see THE OUTRIDERS, GOLDEN GLOVES STORY, CAPTAIN CAREY, THE OUTLAW, and a few more of this type. I know of one major neighborhood circuit theatre in the metropolitan area that received forty-six complaints during the showing of SAMSON AND DELILAH about the advanced admission prices. I know that the manager sent these complaints to the Home Office. Nothing will happen. The next good picture that comes along will probably find its way into the very same circuit at the very same advanced admission prices, if not higher.

What do you suppose the public's reaction will be? They will sit at home and watch television. What will we exhibitors do? We will hold pep meetings, make speeches, and only mention television opposition in whispered tones. We will put out new slogans such as "Movies Are Better Than Ever" and "Let's Go Out to the Movies," buy a larger supply of crying towels, weep on each other's shoulders, and then wait for another good picture to come along so that we can again raise our admission prices.

Oh Boy! What a lopsided industry this is!

Very sincerely yours,
LANE ENTERPRISES
(Signed) ISRAEL ZATKIN
General Manager

R. D. GOLDBERG ENTERPRISES
STATE THEATRE BUILDING
1412 FARNAM STREET
OMAHA 2, NEBRASKA

May 4, 1950

MR. PETE HARRISON
HARRISON'S REPORTS
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

I have been a reader of your reports for many years, and also of your editorials, and with the current series of articles running in the trade journals as to what is wrong with the theatre business, I feel I should write to put in my 2 cents worth as to what I consider one of the things needing the most attention in our industry.

I refer to the practice that many theatre managers and executives have of telling the public that business is bad. I enclose, herewith, a clipping from a Milwaukee newspaper which speaks for itself. You will note that the newspaper has interviewed the leading motion picture exhibitors in Milwaukee, and they have told that the movie business is off 30 to 40 per cent below 1949. I recently had cause to know that an affiliated circuit manager in this city has been telling so many people that business is bad, that he caused the idea to spread in many groups of people who now think it is quite the thing to stay away from the movies.

I have great respect for these men as being bigger theatre operators than myself, but they are certainly pursuing the wrong attitude. We were all raised in the show business where we held people in lines in front of the boxoffice, even when the house was not packed, because the impression of good business was a bigger ad than anything else we could get. It seems to me that if we do not muzzle some of these people within our own industry that are talking too much

to the public, that they are going to do the industry an irreparable damage.

Speaking about the ills of our industry, and because nobody asked me, I venture this opinion. There is nothing wrong whatever, with our business, that three things cannot cure. (1) Better manpower. If the same man who gold-bricks all day and blabs all night that business is bad, will roll up his sleeves and go to work, he is going to have results. There is enough business in nearly every community except in the few spots where locations are impossible, if only the manpower in the show business will get the lead out and go after it. (2) Better pictures. Of course that is a problem for the producers. (3) Repeal of the admission tax.

Before I close I might mention that the same man who exaggerates telling the public how bad business is, is also the one who exaggerates his business when he makes his boxoffice report to Variety. These exaggerated reports of business help only a few men's vanity, and causes the unions rightfully to make greater demands, while they do the industry no good at all. In this city, my competitor affiliated exhibitors are not satisfied unless Variety carries a report that they are doing from 50 to 100% more business than they are actually doing. As a matter of fact, I do not believe any figures should be published openly, as it is neither the business of the public, the union organizations or anyone else, to have access to the grosses of our business.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) RALPH D. GOLDBERG

"David Harding, Counterspy" with Howard St. John, Willard Parker and Audrey Long

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 71 min.)

A good program spy melodrama. If the subsequent pictures of this new series maintain the quality of this initial production, they should find a ready market. In casting Howard St. John as head of the U. S. counter-spies, Columbia has made a happy selection; he is impressive and believable. The action manages to hold one's interest undiminished to the end. Willard Parker, as a Naval officer, lacks fire, but his part is weak. Audrey Long is fair—she is not given much to do, and what she does is not designed to win the audience's sympathy. The photography is good:—

Howard St. John, head of the U. S. counter-spy division, sees to it that Alex Gerry, a radio commentator, gets a story to the effect that atomic information was stolen and delivered to alien hands. Gerry broadcasts the story and condemns the division for its laxity. St. John then informs Gerry that the story was false, but that it had been planted for the purpose of catching foreign spies. He then relates to him a case that occurred in 1943: The Government had learned that enemy agents were at work in a small town, where Navy torpedoes were manufactured. A Navy officer had been found dead in his bed, ostensibly from a fire started by his cigarette, but St. John had suspected murder and had detailed Willard Parker to take over the dead officer's job, hoping to learn the killer's identity. This had opened up an old entanglement for Parker, because Audrey Long, the dead man's wife, with whom he had been in love, had been assigned as his secretary. Parker had become suspicious of Raymond Greenleaf, a doctor at the factory, as aiding the spies, and he had come upon evidence indicating that Audrey had been in league with Greenleaf. His suspicions about Audrey had been correct, but he had been unaware of the fact that she, having fallen in love with him, had been trying to get out of her spy work. Meanwhile St. John had learned that Audrey had been sent to the U. S. as a spy long before Pearl Harbor, with instructions to marry a naval officer. When her husband had discovered this truth, he had been killed by the spy ring. St. John's men had finally closed in on Greenleaf's gang, but not before Greenleaf had shot and killed Audrey, who had tried to save Parker's life by warning him not to cross a street that had been mined. Greenleaf, before being shot down by U. S. agents, had been inveigled into sending misinformation to his chief. When St. John finishes telling Gerry the story, the radio commentator is satisfied for having been used as a cat's paw for the good of the country.

Milton Feldman produced it and Ray Nazarro directed it, from a story and screen play by Clint Johnson and Tom Reed, who based it on the radio program, "Counterspy," created by Phillips H. Lord.

Good for the entire family.

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482 HOUSES SHUT DOWN IN PAST SIX MONTHS

In a bulletin issued early this week, Abram F. Myers, chairman of COMPO's Committee on Taxation and Legislation, states that a survey conducted by his Committee with the aid of the film companies discloses that 482 motion picture theatres have closed their doors permanently during the past six months. This figure is based on reports received from twenty-five of the thirty-two film exchanges in the country, and when the seven remaining exchanges submit their reports the figure will undoubtedly be well over the five hundred mark.

The exchanges reporting and the number of theatres closed in each territory are as follows:

Albany, 10; Atlanta, 48; Boston, 27; Buffalo, 7; Charlotte, 5; Chicago, 21; Cincinnati, 38; Cleveland, 9; Dallas, 63; Denver, 0; Des Moines, 5; Detroit, 37; Indianapolis, 3; Jacksonville-Tampa, 14; Los Angeles, 28; Milwaukee, 8; Minneapolis, 22; New Haven, 1; New Orleans, 18; New York, 5; Omaha, 8; Philadelphia, 71; Pittsburgh, 13; San Francisco, 14; and Seattle, 7.

The exchanges that have not yet reported include Memphis, St. Louis, Kansas City, Salt Lake City, Oklahoma City, Portland, Oregon, and Washington, D. C.

The huge number of theatre closings disclosed by this survey is indeed shocking, but it should serve as powerful ammunition to prove to Congress that the motion picture theatres have suffered a sharp dip in business and that the 20% tax on admissions has been an important factor in bringing about this decline.

Although the survey is not complete, Mr. Myers expressed the hope that members of the industry will make use of these figures in writing to their Congressmen and Senators requesting total repeal of the 20% tax.

CHARLES P. SKOURAS' SHOWMANSHIP CAMPAIGN

Following the showmanship meeting called in Chicago recently by Mr. Spyros P. Skouras, president of Twentieth Century-Fox, Mr. Charles P. Skouras, president of National Theatres and Fox-West Coast Theatres, called together the heads of his different departments, including his publicity men, and set them to work preparing a campaign designed to stimulate the public's interest in motion pictures and to revive the flow of admission dollars into the nation's box-offices.

On Monday, May 22, Mr. Skouras asked representatives of the trade press to have luncheon with him at his headquarters in Hollywood. There he presented each representative with an elaborate seventy-page manual, entitled "Let's Prove Movies Are Better Than Ever," and asked their cooperation in bringing it to the attention of the industry to the end that other exhibitors may know of the campaign, which is designed to hit forcefully every phase of motion picture merchandising and exploitation.

In the preamble, Mr. Skouras said partly:

"Outlined in this campaign book are the basic and proven showmanship tactics that every successful exhibitor, whether he be circuit head or independent, has personally executed during his career. They've all been tried; they've all been successful and by employing them again, today's problems will be overcome."

Following the prologue page, all phases of the campaign are blueprinted and outlined in detail, with the different exploitation devices and techniques indexed, and with each idea treated in several pages.

These ideas and techniques include selling person-to-person; selling the picture to the theatre-going public through the newspapers; selling the audiences through the

screen and through the slogan "Movies Are Better Than Ever"; selling the attraction with "gimmicks"; re-selling the patron; selling the picture and the theatre in places away from the theatre; utilizing television as well as radio; selling the children, whom the book describes as "walking broadcasting stations"; and, finally, selling the patrons with pictures.

In the opinion of this paper the manual contains one of the most extensive merchandising and exploitation campaigns ever devised, and it is worth studying by every exhibitor. Despite the high initial cost of compiling the manual, arrangements have been made to sell it to the exhibitors at a nominal charge of one dollar per copy.

If any exhibitor is interested, he may write to Metropolitan Mat Service, 303 East Fourth Street, Los Angeles, California.

EXHIBITOR OPPOSITION TO SALE OF FILMS TO TELEVISION WORLDWIDE

According to a report in the May 24 issue of *Film Daily*, the European Association of Movie Theatre Exhibitors, said to represent more than 32,000 theatres in Belgium, France, Great Britain, Luxemburg, Holland, Italy and Switzerland, met in Paris early in May to find international ways and means to safeguard theatres against the threats of television.

By unanimous resolution the delegates went on record as "strongly opposed to the sale or hire to any television broadcasting concern of any cinematograph film produced for commercial exhibition." The resolution also urged producers in the United States and Europe "not to produce any cinematograph film unless the television rights thereof are acquired and not disposed of for any television purpose whatsoever."

That the American exhibitors are in sympathy with the feelings of the European exhibitors is evidenced by the resolution adopted last week by National Allied's board of directors, at its meeting in Memphis, congratulating and commending those producers and distributors who have voluntarily announced that they will not license their films for non-theatrical exhibition on television, Phonovision and 16 mm. Allied's board expressed "amazement and resentment" that any producer or distributor "should add to the difficulties and perplexities of their theatre customers and jeopardize their own established market by licensing their product in competition with these theatres."

The licensing of films produced for commercial theatrical exhibition to a competitive medium like television is a matter that should be given deep study by the producers and distributors, particularly the independent producers, who have made most of the better pictures that are now being shown on television. In some cases, of course, these producers are not to blame, for they sold all rights to their pictures long before the advent of television as a competitive entertainment medium. But the producer or distributor who licenses a picture to television today will no doubt find the going rough in his future dealings with the exhibitors, both at home and abroad, for they are in no mood to support those whose dealings with television serve to undermine theatre attendance.

In a statement given to this paper and published in the April 22 issue, Mr. Trueman T. Rembusch, president of National Allied, had this to say, in part: "I for one am not going to play any producer's pictures that is so traitorous to the motion picture industry as to sell his productions, new or old, to television or to Phonovision. I imagine that a great many exhibitors feel as I do."

The action taken by the European exhibitors and by National Allied's board of directors bear out Mr. Rembusch's sentiments.

**"My Friend Irma Goes West" with
John Lund, Marie Wilson, Diana Lewis,
Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis**

(Paramount, July; time, 91 min.)

A good sequel to "My Friend Irma"; it should do comparable business. As was the case in the first "Irma" picture, the plot is nonsensical and the comedy is in a slapstick vein, but it moves along at a fast pace and the gags and situations keep one laughing throughout. Most of the hilarity is caused by the broad comedy antics of Jerry Lewis, who really carries the film. His misadventure with Indians and the sequences in which he appears with a pet chimpanzee and they ape each other are extremely funny. Except for Corrine Calvet, who plays the role of a sexy French actress, the other principal players are the same as in the first "Irma" picture, with each enacting his or her original role. Worked into the proceedings to good effect are several melodious tunes sung by Dean Martin, one of which he sings with Miss Calvet. One sequence, where Martin sings and Lewis conducts the orchestra, is hilariously comical:—

After many months of inactivity, John Lund, Marie Wilson's lazy boy-friend, finally manages to land a spot on a television show for Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. But when the boys are paid off in spaghetti cans, Diana Lynn, Martin's girl-friend, decides to take over their management herself. She concludes a deal with a motion picture producer to pay the boys \$500 a week, and she draws out her savings so that all, including Marie and Lund, could start for Hollywood immediately. When they reach Albuquerque, however, they learn from the newspapers that the man who had given the boys a contract was a lunatic. With the group stranded, Lund takes charge of matters and proceeds to promote a film contract for Martin with Corrine Calvet, a French actress, who had taken quite a liking to Martin on the train, much to Diana's chagrin. She agrees to co-star Martin in her next picture provided Lund delivers him to Las Vegas, for which city she was bound to divorce her husband. Lund manages to get transportation for the whole group by promoting a job for himself as a roulette wheel operator in a crooked gambling club owned by Lloyd Corrigan. Complications arise when Marie visits Lund at the club and innocently cuts some wires that controlled the roulette wheel. As a result, the customers win money hand over fist. Corrigan, learning the reason, orders two of his trigger-men to take Lund and Marie for a one-way ride. Lund, thinking fast, makes a deal with the gangsters to hold Marie while he tries to raise the money that was lost. He goes to the sheriff for help, but it is Lewis who stumbles across the gangster's hideout and rescues Marie—much to the relief of the gangsters.

It was produced by Hal B. Wallis and directed by Hal Walker, from a screen play by Cy Howard and Parke Levy, based on Mr. Howard's radio program.

There are no objectionable situations.

**"Louisa" with Ronald Reagan,
Charles Coburn, Ruth Hussey,
Edmund Gwenn and Spring Byington**

(Univ.-Int'l, no rel. date set; time, 90 min.)

Very good! It is a romantic comedy, one that is decidedly different from most pictures of this type, for the principals in the romantic triangle are a grandmother and two elderly suitors—all three about sixty years of age. It is the sort of picture that should thoroughly entertain all types of moviegoers, particularly family audiences, for it is at once a warming, charming and highly amusing film, endowed with fine characterizations, a well-written screenplay, and a tasteful treatment. The comedy is provoked, not only by the intense rivalry between the elderly suitors, but also by the turmoil and nervous tension the grandmother's romantic complications cause in the household of her son. Spring Byington, Edmund Gwenn and Charles Coburn are excellent as the romancing elders, as are Ronald Reagan and Ruth Hussey, as Miss Byington's concerned son and daughter-in-law. An amusing twist to the story is the prudish attitude adopted by Reagan's 'teen-aged daughter toward the romantic antics of her grandmother. The picture is worthy of an exhibitor's best exploitation efforts to overcome the fact that the marquee value of the players is light:—

Reagan finds his household upset when Spring, his widowed mother, moves in and starts to criticize his wife for her management and scolds the children for minor things. To

restore peace, he urges her to occupy herself with outside interests. She takes his advice and becomes friendly with Gwenn, the neighborhood grocer, an aging widower, and before long becomes romantically involved with him. Reagan protests, but she tells him that she is old enough to know her own mind, and induces Ruth, Reagan's wife, to invite Gwenn to dinner. Gwenn, a genial old man, charms the family when he comes to dinner, but trouble arises when Charles Coburn, Reagan's boss, arrives unexpectedly to discuss an important business matter. He meets Reagan's mother for the first time and is immediately stricken with her. His undivided attention to Spring infuriates Gwenn and causes him to storm out in a rage of jealousy. Spring, angered, accepts Coburn's invitation to go riding with him. On the following night Coburn escorts Spring to a country club barn dance, where he and Gwenn compete in various dance contests, with Coburn always winning. But Spring's sympathies go to Gwenn when Coburn throws him in an Indian wrestling match. Coburn disappears for several days, then shows up with a detective's report stating that Gwenn had been married four times without benefit of divorce. Reagan, shocked, orders his mother to break with Gwenn. She disappears during the night and, after a frantic hunt, is finally located in Gwenn's apartment, where she announces that she and Gwenn are going to get married. Gwenn then explains the detective's report: each of the weddings were to his first wife; every tenth anniversary, until her death, they had repeated the ceremony. Several days later Reagan gives his mother in marriage to Gwenn, while Coburn grumbles that "it won't last."

It was produced by Robert Arthur and directed by Alexander Hall from a story and screen play by Stanley Roberts.

Excellent for the family.

**"So Young, So Bad" with Paul Henreid,
Catherine McLeod and Grace Coppin**

(United Artists, May 19; time, 88 min.)

Ordinary. Dealing with the efforts of a psychiatrist to aid delinquent girls to become useful members of society, and to bring about reforms in the brutal disciplinary methods employed in a girl's reformatory, the story is trite and offers little that is novel either in treatment or in characterizations. As in Warner Brothers' "Caged," to which this story bears a strong resemblance, the cruelty and inhumanity shown by the sadistic prison authorities towards the inmates are exaggerated to a point where it becomes difficult to believe that such conditions can possibly exist in this day and age. The performances are good, in fact, superior to the story material. The direction, however, is not outstanding:—

Taking up his new duties as psychiatrist in a reformatory for delinquent girls, Paul Henreid centers his attentions on four newly-arrived girls, including Anne Francis, a young mother, and Rosita Moreno, both convicted for vagrancy, and Anne Jackson and Enid Pulver, both convicted for stealing. After a talk with the girls he recommends that they be assigned to certain duties that would help their rehabilitation, but he soon discovers that his recommendations are ignored by Cecil Clovelly, the tyrannical superintendent, and Grace Coppin, the sadistic head matron. Catherine McLeod, a social worker at the institution, sympathizes with Henreid and warns him against hoping to change things. Both, however, gain the upper hand on Clovelly when they obtain indisputable evidence of unspeakable brutalities against the girls. Alarmed lest there be an investigation, Clovelly makes a deal with them to run the institution in any manner they see fit. The reformatory becomes a changed place overnight, and under the new regime the girls find their lives filled with new hope. Clovelly, waiting for a chance to resume his power, finds it when Rosita commits suicide after Miss Coppin brutally clips off her hair. Anne Francis and Anne Jackson, frightened, escape. Clovelly immediately suspends Henreid and Catherine and brings them up on charges before an investigating board. The girls cowed and beaten into submission again, deny that any brutality had been practiced on them, despite Henreid's pleas that they need not be afraid to tell the truth. Learning of Henreid's predicament, the two escaped girls return voluntarily and submit evidence that vindicates him and brings about the arrest of Clovelly and Miss Coppin. Henreid and Catherine, by this time in love, take charge of the institution.

It was produced by Edward J. and Harry Lee Danziger, and directed by Bernard Vorhaus, who wrote the story and screen play in collaboration with Jean Rouverol.

Adult fare.

"Her Wonderful Lie" with Marta Eggerth, Jan Kiepura and Janis Carter

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 86 min.)

A mediocre musical drama. It is a modern story that parallels the plot of Puccini's operatic story, "La Boheme," in which the life of the heroine is similar to that of the heroine in the opera. The picture, which was produced in Italy, seems best suited for the lovers of operatic music, but even these will probably find it disappointing, for the singing of the principals, perhaps due to the poor sound track, is not always of good quality. The story itself is dull, and the direction and acting amateurish. As a matter of fact, audiences will probably laugh at some of the serious scenes:

Marta Eggerth, a sales girl employed in a Paris dress shop, is taken by Janis Carter, her friend, to a party given by Jan Kiepura, a struggling singer, in the apartment he shared with three companions (Sterling Holloway, Marc Platt and Gil Lamb). Jan becomes enthusiastic over Marta's voice when she sings a song, and both find that they have much in common when they discover that each is a Polish refugee. Strongly attracted to each other, Jan persuades Marta to develop her voice with his help. Jan's failure to find employment discourages him and distresses her. To help him, she appeals to Douglas Dumbille, a wealthy middle-aged man, who had long sought her love. Douglas uses his influence to obtain an audition for Jan at the opera, thus helping the young man to win a contract and make his debut in "La Boheme." Marta, unable to attend the performance because of illness, learns that she is tubercular. Jan, flushed with success, proposes marriage to her, but Marta, fearing that her illness would be a deterrent to his career, rejects him for Dumbille without revealing the true reason. In the months that pass, Marta rests at Dumbille's villa in Nice, while Jan broods over their separation. Completely rested but aware that her days were numbered, Marta, again through Dumbille's influence, obtains a contract with the opera to sing with Jan. The strenuous rehearsals impair her health even more, but on the night of her debut she insists upon going through with the performance of "La Boheme." In the last act, living instead of playing the part of "Mimi," she dies on the stage in Jan's arms.

It is a Gregor Rabinovich production, directed by Carmine Gallone, from a screen play by Ernst Marischka, Hamilton Benz and Rowland Leigh, based on the novel, "Latin Quarter." Unobjectionable morally.

"Lucky Losers" with Leo Gorcey and the Bowery Boys

(Monogram, May 14; time, 70 min.)

Very good! It rates as one of the best in this series, for the story is different from the ordinary run. There is a murder, gambling conducted as it is in real life, and sleuthing by Leo Gorcey and his gang until they trap the criminals. While Gorcey and his pals are working in the gambling casino, the spectator is held in suspense because their lives are in constant danger. There is considerable comedy throughout, provoked mostly by Huntz Hall. William Beaudine's direction is fine, as usual; and so is the acting. The photography is up to standard:—

Gorcey and Hall work as runners for a New York brokerage firm owned by Selmer Jackson. Wendy Waldron, Jackson's daughter, is romantically interested in Gabriel Dell, a crusading television reporter and friend of Gorcey's gang. Jackson is found dead in his office, and the coroner declares it a suicide. Unwilling to believe that Jackson had killed himself, Gorcey snoops around Jackson's office and discovers a pair of dice and a match cover with the insignia of "The High Hat Club," a gambling casino. Gorcey engages an expert to teach him and his pals how to beat all games of chance through crooked methods, after which all manage to obtain employment at the club, which was operated by Lyle Talbot and Hillary Brooke, his associate, who lured the customers into the club to be fleeced. With Gorcey and his pals operating the different gaming tables, they obtain valuable information and feed it to Dell, enabling him to launch a vigorous campaign against Talbot on his television broadcast. Meanwhile Gorcey uncovers evidence establishing the fact that Jackson had been killed by Talbot. When a young millionaire discovers that the games at the club are crooked and threatens to go to the authorities, Talbot has his henchmen murder the young man. Talbot is arrested, but he is exonerated through the political influence of a crooked public official he had in his pay. Aided by the district attorney, Gorcey and his pals gather evidence that exposes the crooked politician behind Talbot and his gambling operations. Talbot and his henchmen are rounded

up, and Gorcey and Hall are acclaimed as heroes when they appear on Dell's television show.

It was produced by Jan Grippo and directed by William Beaudine from a screen play by Charles R. Marion.

Fine entertainment for the family.

"This Side of the Law" with Viveca Lindfors, Kent Smith and Janis Paige

(Warner Bros., June 5; time, 74 min.)

An ordinary program melodrama. The story is far-fetched and unbelievable. The idea of the hero, a vagrant, impersonating a long-missing millionaire, to whom he has an amazing likeness, and being accepted by the missing man's wife, his brother and sister-in-law, is too contrived to give the story any substance. Aside from the story's implausibility, it is unpleasant, for it deals with murder and fraud. Moreover, most of the characters, including the hero, are weak and unprincipled. Except for an exciting fight on the edge of a cliff, there is more talk than action. The direction and acting are average:—

Arrested as a vagrant, Kent Smith's fine is paid by Robert Douglas, a lawyer, who is startled by Smith's likeness to a missing client, whose \$3,000,000 estate awaited settlement. Douglas, bent on keeping the estate for himself, offers Smith \$5,000 to impersonate the missing man and ask no questions. Smith agrees. He goes to the missing man's home, where Viveca Lindfors, his wife, John Alvin, his brother, and Janis Paige, Alvin's wife, are shocked to see him, but he fools them all even though their reception is cold. Before long Smith learns that the man he was impersonating was a cad, that he had been having an affair with Janis, that Viveca had been deeply hurt over the affair, and that his brother hated him murderously. Janis, seeking to renew the affair, discovers that Smith is an imposter but proposes to split the inheritance with him. Smith reveals this to Douglas, who kills Janis and makes the death appear accidental. After arranging with Smith, through forged signatures, to leave the estate to Viveca, with himself as executor, Douglas knocks Smith unconscious and throws him into a huge cistern to die. Smith, recovering, finds himself next to the skeleton of the missing man. Meanwhile Douglas convinces Alvin that Viveca was responsible for Janis' death. Alvin, furious, lures Viveca to the edge of a cliff to kill her, while Douglas summons the police. By this time Smith manages to crawl out of the cistern and rushes to Viveca's rescue as she fights off Alvin, whom he subdues. Douglas, startled when all three return to the house, tries to kill them just as the police arrive. Escaping, he falls into the cistern and dies of a broken neck. Viveca, believing Smith to be honest, plans to start life with him anew.

It was produced by Saul Elkins and directed by Richard Bare from a screen play by Russell Hughes, suggested by a story by Richard Sale. Adult fare.

"The Blue Lamp" with an all-British cast

(Eagle-Lion, June; time, 84 min.)

This British-made melodrama offers a fairly interesting semi-documentary account of the work of the British police in combatting crime. Its mixture of action, robbery and murder, as shown through the experiences of a rookie London "Bobby," is exciting, and it has all the ingredients demanded by the followers of this type of pictures. The one handicap, however, insofar as American audiences are concerned, is the thick Cockney accent used by the players, making the dialogue difficult to understand. But, since one eventually becomes accustomed to the accent, the picture may serve adequately as a supporting feature on a double bill:—

Briefly, the story revolves around Jimmy Hanley, a new London "Bobby," who is taken under the wing of Jack Warner, an old-timer on the force, who teaches him how to handle different police matters. Dirk Bogarde, aided by his girl, Peggy Evans, and by Patric Doonan, his pal, holds up a movie cashier, killing Warner in the process. An intensive search for the crooks is started, and several clues found by Hanley help him to recognize Peggy as a delinquent girl whose photograph had been shown to him by Warner. Scotland Yard, aided by the information supplied by Hanley, starts a systematic follow-up of the clues, trapping the criminals, but they manage to escape in a high-powered car. Radio cars give chase, and Hanley, in one of them, tracks the crooks to the greyhound races where he and his superiors eventually corner the culprits.

It is a Michael Balcon production, directed by Basil Dearden from a screen play by T. E. B. Clarke.

"Curtain Call at Cactus Creek" with Donald O'Connor and Gale Storm

(Univ.-Int'l, June; time, 86 min.)

Photographed in Technicolor, "Curtain Call at Cactus Creek" is a lively and amusing mixture of slapstick, burlesque, songs and dances, revolving around the misadventures of a traveling theatrical company in the days of the wild and wooly West. Although it does have its dull moments here and there, the action for the most part is speedy, the characterizations amusing, and the comical mix-ups laugh-provoking. Donald O'Connor, as a one-man stage crew with ambitions to become an actor, is very good, and his innocent entanglements with a band of bank robbers will provoke much hearty laughter. Gale Storm, as his girlfriend, is appealing, and Eve Arden, as a fading musical comedy star, and Vincent Price, as a "ham" Shakespearian actor, make the most of their interpretations. The old vaudeville skits and the one-act melodramas put on by the troupe add much to the merriment. All in all it is the kind of picture that helps one to pass the time quickly and pleasantly:—

O'Connor is advance man for a traveling repertory company, whose members include Price, Eve and Gale, her niece. The troupe's arrival in a frontier town coincides with a visit by Walter Brennan and his gang of bank robbers. Brennan decides to rob the local bank during the performance, while the townspeople will be diverted. The bank is held up just as O'Connor disrupts the performance by accidentally knocking over the stage backdrops. The troupe, hearing shots, beats a hasty retreat, thinking that the townspeople were after them. As O'Connor sneaks out of town with the show-wagon, Brennan boards it. O'Connor, thinking him to be a stage-struck yokel, takes him along as a helper. A strong friendship develops between the two, but complications arise when Brennan's identity is discovered and O'Connor is arrested as his accomplice. Brennan and his gang release O'Connor from jail and Brennan convinces the youngster that he must now become his successor as leader of the gang. Seeing no other future for himself, O'Connor steals back to town to bid Gale goodbye. He is spotted by the sheriff and his men, who trail him back to Brennan's camp. There, O'Connor finds himself caught in a crossfire between the bandits and the sheriff's posse. Brennan, aware that he is trapped, throws his guns to O'Connor so that the youngster might receive credit for capturing him. Cleared of all charges, O'Connor realizes his ambition to act side-by-side with Gale, while Brennan, paroled in his custody, becomes the one-man stage crew.

It was produced by Robert Arthur and directed by Charles Lamont from a screen play by Howard Dimsdale, based on a story by Stanley Roberts and Mr. Dimsdale himself. The cast includes Chick Chandler, Joe Sawyer, Harry Shannon and others.

Good entertainment for the family.

"It's a Small World" with Paul Dale, Lorraine Miller and Ann Sholter

(Eagle-Lion, June; time, 68 min.)

There is considerable human interest in this program picture, which centers around the trials and tribulations of a midget who seeks to find a place for himself in the world. It is an unusual picture and it keeps one's interest alive all the way through, but how the public will accept a picture in which the chief player, Paul Dale, is a midget, this reviewer does not undertake to say. An exhibitor either has to use his own judgment or he will have to look at it before booking it. The direction and acting are competent:—

Concerned because Paul Dale, his twelve-year-old son had ceased growing, Will Geer, a farmer, takes him to a doctor. He learns that Paul is a midget, and that he had stopped growing at the age of six. Because Paul is taunted by his schoolmates, his father takes him out of school and keeps him on the farm, teaching him, not only his school lessons, but also farming. At the age of twenty-one, Paul leaves the farm with a carnival owner, but the man treats him so cruelly that he runs away from him. In the city, he meets Ted Karns, a philosophical veteran who, having found it difficult to make a livelihood, had taken up shining shoes. He invites Paul to join him as a partner, and their shoe-shine business flourishes. Paul becomes enamoured of Lorraine Miller, a gold-digger, who lived in the same boarding house with him, and who was in league with crooks. Lorraine pretends to care for Paul and leads him on, her

purpose being to use Paul as a decoy, to rob people. She takes Paul to Nina Koshetz, a "fence," who teaches him how to become an expert pickpocket. They dress Paul up as a child, and start him on a career of petty thievery. With Nina posing as his "mother," Paul mingles with the crowds in the city and picks pockets. He becomes disheartened, however, when Lorraine mocks him for dreaming of marrying her. Disillusioned, he telephones the police and all are arrested. The judge, impressed by Paul's basic honesty, pardons him with the understanding that he will join the Cole Brothers circus at their winter quarters in Florida. There, he is antagonistic to the circus crowd at first, but when he meets Ann Sholter, a midget girl, he becomes accustomed to the environment and begins to like it. He ultimately falls in love with Ann, marries her, and prepares to live a useful and happy life.

Peter Scully produced it, and William Castle directed it, from an original screen play by Otto Schreiber and the director.

Suitable family entertainment where there is no objection to crook stories.

"The Good Humor Man" with Jack Carson and Lola Albright

(Columbia, June; time, 80 min.)

This is a noble attempt to duplicate the success of "The Fuller Brush Man," both as to entertainment and box-office; unfortunately, the effort fails, except in the last one-third of the film. That part is fully equal and, in some respects, even superior to the slapstick entertainment values of "The Fuller Brush Man," for it keeps the spectator laughing hilariously. Everything, including the proverbial kitchen stove is thrown in to get laughs. The trouble with the first two-thirds of the picture is that the comedy is forced. On the whole, however, the picture should please, for the last part will send audiences out of the theatre chuckling. The wild doings in the last few reels take place in a high school, through which the crooks chase the hero and the heroine. A masterpiece in slapstick engineering are the scenes where an electric circular saw, overturned in the melee, cuts through the floor and falls into the swimming pool in the basement, chasing all the characters as it gyrates all over the place. The arrival of the school kids, members of the "Captain Marvel Club," to the rescue, should go over big with the youngsters in the audience. This much is obvious: The picture is a huge advertising plug for the Good Humor Ice Cream Company, so much so that Columbia should be reimbursed in full by the company for the production costs and the exhibitors paid for showing it on their screens:—

Jack Carson, a Good Humor salesman, is in love with Lola Albright. She likes him but doubts his ability to support her. Lola is desired also by George Reeves, a suave insurance company investigator, whose secretary she is. The chief reason for Carson's failure to make money is his generosity—giving free ice cream to a group of youngsters, members of the "Captain Marvel Club." Complications enter Carson's life when he comes to the rescue of Jean Wallace, a vivacious blonde, ostensibly being beaten by three ruffians. He interferes, only to be knocked unconscious and shoved into the freezing compartment of his truck. He is rescued by the police, but they refuse to believe his story. The incident costs him his job, but he gets it back when his young friends start to picket the ice cream company. Carson soon gets into another jam when Jean, the girl of the fight, calls him into her home as he passes by with his truck and, by leading him to believe that she is in mortal danger, persuades him to remain overnight to protect her. While Carson sleeps, the three ruffians, Jean's confederates, steal his truck and uniform and use them in the holdup of a company payroll. Carson awakens to find Jean apparently strangled to death. He goes for the police only to find the body gone when he returns with them. To add to his troubles, he is suspected of the holdup. Aided by Lola, he sets out to clear himself and learns that the gang was headed secretly by Reeves. The gang attempts to dispose of both Carson and Lola, and after a mad chase all end up at the local high school, where the crooks are subdued by members of the "Captain Marvel Club," summoned at a signal by Carson.

It is a Sylvan Simon production, directed by Lloyd Bacon from a screen play by Frank Tashlin, based on the Saturday Evening Post story, Appointment With Fear," by Roy Higgins.

Good for family audiences.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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COMPO DISCLOSURE OF 580 THEATRE CLOSINGS AN ALERT SIGNAL

Final figures released this week by Abram F. Myers, chairman of COMPO's Committee on Taxation and Legislation, disclose that 98 theatres closed their doors permanently in the seven film delivery territories not reported in the announcement of its survey last week. This number, added to the 482 reported previously, makes for a total of 580 theatres that have shut down in the past six months.

The seven exchanges reported this week and the number of theatres closed in each exchange are as follows:

Portland, Oregon, 1; Memphis, 27; St. Louis, 12; Oklahoma City, 23; Kansas City, 16; Salt Lake City, 6; and Washington, D. C., 13.

The closing down of 580 theatres at a time when employment and individual incomes have been maintained at record-breaking levels is indicative of the fact that the motion picture industry is undergoing a period of economic stress that is, to say the least, bewildering. In times past, when almost all other lines of business were suffering, the motion picture business flourished. But, today, while most other industries continue to prosper, our industry is in the midst of a serious box-office decline.

One can cite any number of causes that may have brought about the drop in theatre attendance. These include, for example, claims that television is keeping people at home; that picture quality on the whole has not shown a marked improvement, thus nullifying extensive showmanship efforts; and that the increase in installment buying of such items as homes, television sets, automobiles, refrigerators, washing machines, etc., has been so great that many people either no longer find themselves with a spare entertainment dollar or try to make the most of it by going to the theatre only when they feel sure that the program offered is a good one.

There are, of course, individual theatres here and there and even entire sections where business is still good, but reports from most sections of the country indicate that box-office receipts are continuing on the downgrade.

In bringing this condition to the attention of its readers, HARRISON'S REPORTS has no desire to seem unduly pessimistic. Optimism is a fine thing, excellent in its way, but facts are facts, and this paper would not be doing its duty to its subscribers if it sought to sidestep or misrepresent them.

Hardly a day goes by without some optimistic report appearing in portions of the trade press to the effect that the future of the business is bright. But these fine words and the plausible promises and prophecies of others must not delude the exhibitor or blind him to the problems he must face in the period of a box-office decline. No exhibitor is going to survive by hoping for miracles; he must depend on his own initiative and his own resources to overcome

the emergency. The complex causes that have brought about the present conditions in the industry will not be remedied overnight, the high-sounding predictions of an early return to normalcy notwithstanding.

If an exhibitor is to survive, he must plan intelligently for the future right now. He not only will have to practice economies never before considered, but he must book, to the best of his ability, only such pictures as are bound to satisfy his patrons so that they may become inured with a feeling of confidence that their next visit to the theatre will be an enjoyable one.

With the advent of the summer months and the slow business that generally prevails, many an exhibitor should mull over the advisability of closing his theatre, for the hot season offers him the best opportunity to clean, decorate and install improvements. As this paper has pointed out in other articles, the one thing that will enable an exhibitor to overcome competitive entertainment mediums, particularly television, is to make his theatre attractive and comfortable for his patrons.

But the fate of the motion picture theatres is not in the hands of the exhibitors alone, for no matter how intelligently they operate their houses, and how intense their showmanship efforts, it will all mean nothing unless there is a decided improvement in the general run of product. There is no question that the producers have come through with some fine pictures in the past six months, but the fact remains that the percentage of poor pictures has not diminished. The good pictures are making their mark at the box-office, but there are not enough of them to take care of the fifty-two weeks in the year.

In recent weeks, several of the producing companies have announced that they have stepped up their production schedules for the coming season, with each planning to produce from 50 to 60 features. These announcements are indeed encouraging, for they signify that the producers have faith in the future of the business and are backing up their faith with production investments that will run into many millions of dollars. The one question in this writer's mind, however, is whether the studios have enough personnel with sufficient creative ability to make pictures of actual box-office value. Past experience has shown that a company producing 50 to 60 pictures a year rarely made more than ten that meant anything at the box-office, while the others were merely routine pictures produced to meet a releasing schedule. It is this over-abundance of routine pictures that has proved a bane to the motion picture industry, and the fewer that are made the better for all concerned. People would rather sit at home and see a bad movie on television than go to a theatre and pay for the "privilege."

The days ahead are not going to be easy ones for the motion picture industry, but intelligent, realistic planning on the part of both the producers and the exhibitors should carry us successfully over the emergency. If we hope for miracles and keep pooh-poohing the inroads made on our business by other entertainment mediums, such an attitude may very well prove to be our swan song.

"The Next Voice You Hear" with James Whitmore and Nancy Davis

(MGM, no release date set; time, 82 min.)

Dore Schary has fashioned a most impressive and unusual picture in "The Next Voice You Hear," a stirring drama of the reactions of people when God speaks to them on the radio. It is a decidedly different picture, yet it should go over in a big way with all types of audiences, for it puts over its message of faith, kindness, and love for one's fellow man not by preachment, but by means of a strongly appealing human-interest story that depicts the emotional upset and eventual understanding that takes place in a typical American household. The subject matter is considerably off the beaten path, and Mr. Schary, as producer, and William Wellman, as director, deserve great credit for the good taste and dignity with which they have handled it.

The story has God taking to the radio at precisely 8:30 every night for six nights to warn and remind people throughout the world that they had forgotten to practice love, kindness and understanding of one another. To typify the emotional upset caused by this phenomena, the camera centers its attention on the household of James Whitmore, an average American worker employed in a west coast airplane plant, who lives happily in his modest home with Nancy Davis, his wife, who is expecting her second child, and Gary Gray, their 10-year-old son, who earned pocket money by delivering newspapers. The happy existence of the family is disturbed one evening when Whitmore, listening to the radio, hears the voice of God admonish him. He believes the voice to be a hoax, but other people in town claim to have heard it and the newspapers report that it had been heard in other parts of the world at the same time in different languages. When God broadcasts again on the second night, Whitmore, like a number of his friends, is still dubious, but he becomes convinced when God, to give effect to His words, causes a frightening flash thunderstorm. He becomes gripped with fear, goes through a harrowing experience when his wife is taken to the hospital with false labor pains, and in general anticipates that the worst will happen to him and his loved ones. But he rids himself of this fear within the next few days when God gets over his message for the need of peace and understanding among all people. In the end, he becomes more tolerant towards Lillian Bronson, his panicky spinster sister-in-law, and towards Art Smith, his grumpy foreman, whose job he had coveted. And when the time comes for Nancy to have her baby, he stands by calmly in the hospital, confident that everything will turn out all right because of his renewed faith in God.

A brief synopsis cannot do justice to the many human touches in the story nor to the heart-warming relationship between Whitmore and his wife. There are some fine comedy touches, too, particularly in the sequence where Whitmore tries to drown his fear in drink, and in the scenes where he tangles with a motorcycle cop for reckless driving. The performances are excellent, with those of Whitmore and Miss Davis outstanding. Charles Schnee wrote the fine screen play, based on a story by George Sumner Albee. The cast includes Tom D'Andrea, Jeff Corey and others.

Excellent for all types of audiences.

"The Rocking Horse Winner" with an all-British cast

(Univ.-Int'l, June; time, 91 min.)

This is a curious British-made tragic drama, revolving around a sensitive youngster who destroys himself in an effort to satisfy his selfish mother's insatiable thirst for money. It is an unhappy tale, expertly directed and acted, but as entertainment, if it can be called such, its appeal will be directed to the very few—those who patronize the art houses. The curious story, with its overtones of the supernatural, is too weird to be enjoyed by the general run of movie-goers.

In the development of the story, Valerie Hobson, a spend-thrift, constantly quarrels with Hugh Sinclair, her weak-willed husband, over his inability to keep them out of financial difficulties. John Howard Davies, their 10-year-old son,

becomes depressed with the perpetual bickering over money, and finds a warm and understanding friend in John Mills, a former jockey who had come to work for the family as a handyman. Gifted with a rocking horse at Christmas time, the boy is fascinated by Mills' stories of his turf exploits. Later, while riding the rocking horse in his room, he becomes conscious of whisperings that are a continual cry for money. He imagines himself a real jockey, and in his imaginations finds himself able to predict the winners of forthcoming horse races. With the secret aid of Mills and of Ronald Squire, his uncle, the boy starts betting with a few shillings and soon amasses a fortune, which he turns over to his mother without letting her know of its origin. This new wealth makes her even more extravagant, and the youngster, driven by a sense of worry and urgency to keep her happy, suddenly finds himself unable to predict the winners. He resorts to frenzied spells of riding his rocking horse and manages eventually to pick the winner of the Derby, thus winning a fortune, but the effort brings about his death from a brainstorm. The tragedy brings his mother to her senses regarding money.

The screen play was written and directed by Anthony Pelissier, based on the short story by D. H. Lawrence. John Mills produced it.

Adult fare.

"Destination Big House" with Dorothy Patrick and Robert Rockwell

(Republic, June 1; time, 60 min.)

In spite of the fact that the story strains one's credulity, there is enough originality in this program melodrama to put it a notch above most supporting features. It is not, as the title indicates, a prison picture. The plot, which revolves around a pretty schoolteacher who becomes innocently involved in scandal and with crooks when a dying gangster she had befriended wills her \$80,000, has many surprising and amusing twists. It succeeds in holding one's attention throughout, for one never knows what will happen next. Towards the finish, the story becomes rather wildly melodramatic and loses its effect, but not to the extent where it hurts one's enjoyment of the proceedings as a whole:—

While spending the week-end alone in the mountain cabin of Robert Rockwell, her fiance and a doctor, Dorothy Patrick gives first aid to Richard Benedict, who tells her that he had been shot accidentally while hunting. Actually, Benedict was a big-city racketeer, who had run out on his mob with \$80,000 in cash. Benedict hides the money in the cabin and, while Dorothy leaves on an errand, he is shot down by Robert Armstrong and John Harmon, two members of his gang. Benedict manages to get to a hospital and, before he dies, he wills the money to Dorothy without revealing where it was hidden. The newspapers treat the story as if Dorothy had been Benedict's moll, and her denials of any previous acquaintance with him or of knowledge of the existence of the money are disbelieved by all except Rockwell and Jimmy Lydon, her younger brother. To stop the vicious gossip, Dorothy announces that, if the money comes into her possession, she will give it to Rockwell's hospital for a new polio wing. In the events that follow, Armstrong, posing as an income tax agent, persuades Dorothy to search the cabin with him for the money. Meanwhile Lydon, heavily in debt to Larry J. Blake, a local gambling racketeer, is put under pressure to find the money and pay his debt. Lydon succeeds in finding the money, but his conscience compels him to hide it again. Blake and his henchmen, however, beat the information out of Lydon, who manages to warn Dorothy. She in turn enlists Armstrong's aid to take her to an isolated farm house, where Lydon had hidden the \$80,000. Armstrong grabs the money for himself just as Blake and his crooks arrive. A gun battle ensues, with the crooks killing each other off as Rockwell comes to Dorothy's rescue. The money is retrieved and given to the hospital.

It was produced by William Lackey and directed by George Blair from a screen play by Eric Taylor, based on a story by Mortimer Braus.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Spy Hunt" with Howard Duff and Marta Toren

(Univ.-Int'l, June; time, 75 min.)

This post-war espionage melodrama, with its spies and counterspies, is a fair enough picture of its kind, although it does not rise above the level of program fare. The story is on the far-fetched side, but it moves along at a steady clip and whips up enough excitement and suspense to keep the spectator interested. The fact that all the spies concerned are after a piece of microfilm hidden in the collar of an escaped panther loose in the Swiss mountains adds much to the suspense. The performances, while not exceptional, are adequate, and the mountain backgrounds are interesting:—

Marta Toren, a spy for an Eastern European democracy, seeks to smuggle out microfilm evidence of a political murder to UN authorities in Paris, while counterspies of the party that committed the crime seek to intercept it. When the film is passed to her by a fellow-agent who arrives in Milan, Marta, posing as a reporter, goes to a railroad siding to interview Howard Duff, an adventurous American, who was escorting two man-eating panthers that had been consigned to a circus in the United States. She makes a date to meet Duff in a nearby cafe and, when he leaves the freight car, she dopes one of the panthers with drugged meat and conceals the microfilm in its collar. The counterspies learn of her move, and phone ahead to a confederate in Switzerland to derail the train as it speeds through the Alps. Duff, knocked unconscious when he leaps to safety, wakes up in an inn operated by Walter Slezak and learns that both panthers had escaped from their wrecked cages. Before long, Philip Friend, a British correspondent; Philip Dorn, a famous hunter; Robert Douglas, an artist; and Marta, check into the inn as guests. Marta, suspecting all her fellow-guests, tells Duff the truth about the microfilm and enlists his aid. Outwardly friendly but inwardly suspicious, all join in the hunt for the panther. Marta and Duff trap one of the animals, but it proves to be the wrong one. In the events that follow, the other panther is killed and Marta, aided by Duff, recovers the microfilm, but not before Friend, Dorn and Douglas expose themselves as counterspies and die in different attempts to recover the microfilm themselves. It ends with Marta and Duff agreeing to form a partnership for life.

It was produced by Ralph Dietrich, and directed by George Sherman, from a screen play by George Zuckerman and Leonard Lee, based on the book "Panther's Moon," by Victor Canning. Unobjectionable for the family.

"Armored Car Robbery" with Charles McGraw and Adele Jergens

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 68 min.)

The followers of cops-and-robbers melodramas should get ample satisfaction out of this program picture. Other than the fact that the action depicts an armored car robbery, giving the exhibitor an exploitable angle because of the recent Brinks holdup in Boston, the story itself follows a familiar pattern, offering little that is novel. It holds one's interest well, however, for the action is fast and the encounters between the police and the crooks generate considerable excitement. The closing scenes, where the police close in on the villain and rescue one of their colleagues who had been trapped posing as a crook, are thrilling. The direction and performances are good:—

William Talman, an expert mobster, lays careful plans to pull an armored car robbery, and lines up his helpers, Douglas Fowley, Steve Brodie and Gene Evans, and drills them in their duties. Fowley, married to Adele Jergens, a burlesque queen, was unaware of the fact that she was having an affair with Talman. The four crooks hold up the armored car under cover of a tear gas attack. Police lieutenants Charles McGraw and James Flavin, cruising nearby when the radio alarm comes, rush to the scene. Flavin is wounded mortally in the chase that follows, and the crooks, with Fowley badly hurt, manage to escape. Talman kills Fowley when he demands a doctor, and Evans is shot down by the police when he attempts to dispose of the body. Talman and Brodie separate hurriedly, with Talman taking charge of the loot. When Fowley's body is identified,

McGraw questions Adele. She denies all knowledge of the affair, but McGraw orders a watch on her activities. Through clever detective work, McGraw finds evidence of Talman's involvement in the robbery and traces him to a motel, but the wily crook escapes just in time. A break comes in the case when Brodie, broke, is picked up by McGraw as he tries to contact Adele to learn of Talman's whereabouts. Learning that Adele had never met Brodie, McGraw arranges with Don McGuire, a detective, to impersonate the thief so as to get information about Talman from Adele. The trap backfires when Talman discovers the ruse and, at gunpoint, forces McGuire into Adele's car and plans to kill him. But McGraw, having anticipated such an emergency, had secretly installed a tiny radio transmitter in Adele's car. By keeping up a running conversation with Talman, McGuire keeps McGraw informed of their route, thus enabling him to close in on the criminal and effect his (McGuire's) rescue.

It was produced by Herman Schlom, and directed by Richard Fleischer, from a screen play by Earl Felton and Gerald Drayson Adams, based on a story by Robert Angus and Robert Leeds. Adele fare.

"Winchester '73" with James Stewart, Shelley Winters and Dan Duryea

(Univ.-Int'l, July; time, 92 min.)

This is a rip-roaring big-scale western, superior to most pictures of this type offered in recent months. Even those who ordinarily stay away from westerns should find this one entertaining, for, in addition to the fact that it is crammed with excitement and suspense, the story is different enough to hold one's attention throughout, even though the situations are not always convincing. It should provide a field day for the action fans in particular, for it is loaded with killings, shootings and violence, and a spectacular rifle duel at the finish will make their hair stand on end. The story is, however, unpleasant, for it pits brother against brother in a vicious display of hatred, with one killing the other at the end. The direction is good, the characterizations colorful, and the performances first-rate:—

James Stewart and Millard Mitchell, his friend, ride into Dodge City to compete in a rifle match, the winner of which was to receive a prized 1873 model Winchester rifle. Stewart finds his chief competitor to be none other than Stephen McNally, his brother, whom he had long sought to kill for having shot their father in the back. Will Geer, the sheriff, compels them to keep the peace. Stewart wins the contest and the rifle, only to have it stolen when he is ambushed by McNally. While Stewart and Mitchell go in search of him, McNally loses the rifle in a poker game with a dishonest Indian trader (John McIntire), who in turn loses it to an enraged Indian chief he tries to cheat. Meanwhile Stewart and Mitchell, continuing their manhunt, take refuge with an encampment of U. S. Cavalry soldiers when they are menaced by the Indians. There, Stewart meets Shelley Winters, a dance hall girl, and Charles Drake, her cowardly fiance; they, too, had taken refuge in the camp. Stewart helps the soldiers to repulse an attack by the Indians, then leaves to continue his search for McNally. Meanwhile his prize rifle is found next to the dead Indian chief and given to Drake. On the following day, Shelley and Drake meet up with Dan Duryea, a vicious outlaw, who kills Drake in an argument precipitated by Shelley's charms, and takes possession of the rifle. Duryea, taking Shelley along with him, goes to meet McNally to carry out a bank holdup in a town nearby. McNally, upon meeting Duryea, retrieves the gun. Stewart and Mitchell ride into town at the moment when McNally and his desperadoes emerge from the bank with the loot. McNally flees into the hills, where he is finally trapped and killed by Stewart after a hair-raising gun duel. With his father's murder avenged, and with the prized Winchester back in his possession, Stewart turns his attention to Shelley.

It was produced by Aaron Rosenberg and directed by Anthony Mann from a screen play by Robert L. Richards and Borden Chase, based on a story by Stuart N. Lake.

Unobjectionable for the family.

SUPREME COURT'S REFUSAL TO HEAR APPEALS FINAL WORD ON DIVORCEMENT DECREE

What appears to be the final word on the Government's 12-year-old anti-trust suit against the major companies was handed down on Monday of this week when the Supreme Court, by unanimous decision, affirmed the decree handed down by the New York Statutory Court on February 8, and declined to hear the appeals of the three remaining defendants, Loew's, 20th Century-Fox and Warner Bros.

Under the decree, the three remaining defendants must submit to the Court within six months a plan for the separation of their exhibition operations from their production distribution business, with complete divestiture and divorcement to be accomplished within a period of three years. Moreover, the Government and the defendants must within one year submit respectively plans for divestiture of theatre interests other than those heretofore ordered to be divested, "which they believe to be adequate to satisfy the requirements of the Supreme Court decision. . . ."

Any distributing company that will result from the divorcement is enjoined from engaging in the exhibition business, and any exhibitor company that results is likewise enjoined from engaging in the distribution business, unless specific permission is granted by the Court upon a showing that any such engagement will not unreasonably restrain competition in the respective fields.

The decree also enjoins the defendants from continuing to engage in certain trade practices previously found illegal, and it also directs them to offer each of their pictures theatre by theatre, and without discrimination.

The defendants have fifteen days in which to apply to the Supreme Court for reconsideration of their appeals. Whether any of them might adopt such a course has not been determined as of this writing, but even if they should it is doubtful, in view of the Court's unanimous decision, that a rehearing will be granted.

"The Iroquois Trail" with George Montgomery and Brenda Marshall

(United Artists, June 16; time, 85 min.)

A pretty good historical adventure melodrama, with an appeal to those who are more interested in wildly melodramatic situations than in story values. Based on James Fenimore Cooper's classic "Leather Stocking Tales," the story is similar in many respects to "The Last of the Mohicans," and takes place during the 1750's when the British and French fought for control of the St. Lawrence and Hudson River Valleys. Discriminating patrons will find the story too complicated, the situations implausible, and the acting stilted. Moreover, it is handicapped by a number of dull stretches because of excessive dialogue. But it has enough ingredients to satisfy the action fans, for there are battles between the French and the British, a massacre by howling Indians, a furious hand-to-hand struggle between the hero and a villainous Indian spy, a death-defying canoe chase, and hairbreadth rescues. Some of the action is gory and brutal but it is all exciting:—

Glenn Langan, a captain in the British Army, arrives in Albany with secret orders signalling the start of the war with the French and Huron Indian tribe. Langan's new assignment reunites him with Brenda Marshall, whose father, Paul Cavanagh, commanded Fort Williams. Dan Garner, a dispatch rider, is ordered to deliver important papers to a British outpost, and Reginald Denny, in dispatching him, sends along two scouts, John Doucette, a white man, and Sheldon Leonard, an Indian. Unknown to the British, Denny and the two scouts were in the pay of the French. The scouts murder Garner, making it appear as if he had traitorously disposed of the papers to the French. George Montgomery, Garner's brother and a famous scout himself,

refuses to believe that his brother had been a traitor and, together with Monte Blue, a friendly Mohawk Indian, he sets out to avenge Garner's death and clear his name. He tracks down Doucette and kills him, and then lays plans to get Leonard. Realizing that someone in the British Army was in league with Leonard, Montgomery joins the British forces to learn his identity. The crafty Denny, aware of Montgomery's purpose, works together with Leonard and leads the commanding officer to believe that both Montgomery and Blue are French spies. As a result, Montgomery and Blue are jailed for treason. Meanwhile the machinations of Denny and Leonard bring about a serious defeat for the British, after which Leonard, against orders of the French general, leads the Hurons in a massacre at the weakened fort, and makes off with Brenda, claiming her as his squaw. Montgomery escapes from the jail during the massacre and, after a series of exciting events, during which he disposes of Denny, he rescues Brenda after killing Leonard in a hand-to-hand battle. It ends with Montgomery clearing his brother's name, and with Langan stepping out of Brenda's life in the realization that she loved Montgomery.

It was produced by Bernard Small and directed by Phil Karlson from a screen play by Richard Schayer.

Fine for the family.

"Destination Murder" with Joyce MacKenzie, Stanley Clements and Hurd Hatfield

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 72 min.)

An ordinary gangster murder melodrama. It has enough suspense to get by with the indiscriminating movie-goers as a supporting feature, but others will find it undistinguished in writing, direction and acting. The one thing that stands out about the picture is the free advertising plug for Cadillac automobiles. In one sequence, the heroine, asked by the police why she was so positive in her identification of the murderer's getaway car, says: "Any one can recognize this year's Cadillac with the up-sweep in the back!"

The story, a complicated affair, has Albert Dekker, a supposed night-club owner, hiring Stanley Clements, a trigger-happy messenger boy, to murder Franklyn Farnum. Unknown to Clements, Dekker was actually a front man for Hurd Hatfield, the real owner of the club, who posed as Dekker's assistant and who wanted Farnum out of the way to gain racket control of the big city. Joyce MacKenzie, the dead man's daughter, finds reason to suspect Clements and, despite police objections, decides to do her own investigating and deliberately cultivates Clement's acquaintance. Clements, having gambled away the money he had received for the killing, goes to Dekker at the night-club and demands more. Dekker beats him up. Joyce, figuring that she might learn something at the club, assumes another identity and persuades Hatfield to engage her as a cigarette girl. Meanwhile Myrna Dell, Dekker's unfaithful girl-friend, joins Clements in a plot to blackmail Dekker. Hatfield, however, foils the plot and has Dekker murder both Myrna and Clements. As a result of these killings, Joyce becomes convinced that Dekker is her father's murderer. She begs Hatfield, with whom she had fallen in love, to help her convict Dekker. Hatfield, aware that Dekker was planning a double-cross of his own, pretends to agree and then frames matters so that Joyce shoots down Dekker in the belief that she is saving his (Hatfield's) life. The district attorney accepts Joyce's plea of justifiable homicide, but police lieutenant James Flavin, suspecting that Hatfield had master-minded all the killings, sets a trap for him. Exposed, Hatfield attempts a getaway using Joyce as a shield, but police bullets cut him down.

It was directed by Edward L. Cahn, who co-produced it with Maurie M. Suess, based on a story and screen play by Don Martin.

Adult fare.

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BARNEY BALABAN FACES THE FACTS

In his opening address at the Paramount sales convention, held this week in Los Angeles, Barney Balaban, president of the company, warned the delegates that the costs of producing and distributing pictures must come down if the company is to survive under the present changed conditions.

Citing figures furnished by his statistical department, Mr. Balaban said that domestic grosses on the 50 top-grossing pictures released in 1946 ranged from \$2,400,000 to \$9,000,000, whereas in 1950, on the basis of present available information, the 50 top-grossing pictures will turn in domestic grosses ranging from \$1,500,000 to \$5,000,000. "Furthermore," he added, "the current outlook indicates that very few of the A pictures released this year will gross domestic in excess of \$2,000,000."

In pointing up the need for strict economy from the time a picture is planned to its sale for exhibition, Mr. Balaban declared that "the standards of the past belong to another world," and that "the only thinking and planning that will produce results under present conditions are those based on the realities of the future."

"Although the current mood of our industry is to frown on any suggestion that all will not be bright and rosy," he said, "my obligation to you impels me to speak out realistically. I would rather risk the unjust charge of pessimism today than endure the guilt of negligence a year from now."

Mr. Balaban is to be commended for his realistic thinking. As pointed out in these columns last week, optimism is a fine quality, excellent in its way, but it should never blind the business man as to the real problems he must face during a period of declining revenues.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has already counseled the exhibitors not to be deluded by optimistic predictions, but to plan their operations intelligently and realistically to overcome the present period of economic stress. Here you have the same advice from a man who is in a position to know what he is talking about.

MYERS HAILS COURT'S AFFIRMATION AND ALERTS EXHIBITORS ON QUESTION OF DIVESTITURE

Under the heading, "End of the Trail," Mr. Abram F. Myers, general counsel and chairman of the board of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, had this to say in a bulletin dated June 9:

"When on July 25, 1949 the U. S. District Court in New York ruled that the three hold-outs—Loew's, 20th Century and Warner Bros.—must submit to total divorcement, we felt surely that must be the end.

"Then the dilatory tactics about which Thurman Arnold complained so bitterly in 1940 were resumed and it was not until February 8, 1950 that an order was entered on that opinion.

"Then these defendants took the full time allowed by the rules in which to take a second appeal to the Supreme Court and had the time extended for the filing of the record.

"No sooner had the record been filed than WHAM! The Supreme Court affirmed the District Court's divorce-ment decree without even hearing argument.

"A MERITED REBUKE

"The Supreme Court does not act upon impulse, even though it sometimes acts with startling speed. The Paramount case is now 12 years old. The delay has made a

mockery of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. It will be noted that the filing of this last appeal was delayed until almost the end of the present term of court. Argument and a decision in the regular course would have meant further delay of from 6 to 8 months.

"That was too much for the court to swallow. With the issues clearly stated on the face of the appeal papers, the Supreme Court could see that the District Court had carried out the instructions given it on the former appeal. In summarily affirming the District Court's decree the Supreme Court administered a merited rebuke to the defendants.

"The history of this case rivals that in the celebrated case of Jarndyce v. Jarndyce made famous by Charles Dickens. The accumulation of motions, pleadings, briefs and memoranda is staggering in size, appalling in the amount of time and money expended. Some day someone will write a history of this case which will occasion such an outcry at the permissible delays under the existing rules that remedial steps will be taken.

"Meantime, we still hold to our idea of a special anti-trust court as outlined before the House Small Business Committee in November, 1948.

"PARAMOUNT AND RKO VINDICATED

"Following the Supreme Court's decision in May 1948, Paramount and RKO read the handwriting on the wall and voluntarily negotiated with the Department of Justice for decrees which provided, first, for total divorcement and, second, for the divestiture of certain theatres included in the segregated circuits.

"These companies in their desire to conform to the law and put their houses in order, risked the criticism which inevitably would follow in case the other defendants succeeded in securing a reversal of the divorcement order.

"Now the management of those companies has been fully vindicated. The settlements which they made were favorable to their interests because they were obtained at a time when the Department wished to obtain precedents for total divorcement.

"Reporting the summary action of the Supreme Court under the sub-heading 'See Easier Terms for Faster Finis,' Variety says:

"The Government will still welcome settlement talks with the last defendants in the case and offer easier terms in return for a faster windup to the 12-year-old litigation."

"The question of the theatres to be divested by the divorced circuits still is wide open and in the interest of speed and justice should be settled by agreement. But the notion that these recalcitrants, after exhausting their privileges under the rules and the patience of the court, should now be granted special favors for doing what the court says they must do, and what they could and should have done two years ago, is fantastic.

"Independent exhibitors having just grievances against competing theatres affiliated with Loew's, 20th Century or Warner Bros. should send the facts to the Department of Justice for consideration when the question of divestiture comes up.

"The decree entered by the District Court on February 8 will become a final decree within the meaning of Sec. 5 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C.A. Sec. 16) when the mandate of the Supreme Court is sent down—in about 30 days. This is of importance to independent exhibitors having triple-damage suits against defendant film companies.

"Of course, the defendants can ask the Supreme Court for a re-hearing on its order of affirmance and the trade papers are hinting that they will do so. A burnt child knows enough to shun the fire, but not some grown-ups."

"Broken Arrow" with James Stewart, Jeff Chandler and Debra Paget

(20th Century-Fox, August; time, 93 min.)

Photographed in Technicolor, this is a fine historical western, expertly written, directed and acted. It is a picture that should satisfy all types of patrons, western fans or not, for, in addition to the exciting action in the conflict between the Apache Indians and the pioneering whites in the Arizona territory in 1870, it offers a powerfully dramatic story in the sincere joint efforts of a fearless frontiersman and an equally fearless Apache chief to bring about a state of peace and understanding between their peoples, despite the machinations of treacherous renegades on both sides. James Stewart, as the frontiersman, and Jeff Chandler, as the Apache chief, are excellent in their sympathetic characterizations. There is much human appeal in Stewart's tender romance with, and marriage to, an Indian maiden, played by Debra Paget, an appealing newcomer. Her death, when she is shot by renegade whites from ambush, is most tragic. Credit is due the makers of this film for their understanding portrayal of the Indian side of American history, and for their fairness in depicting good and evil on both sides. Although the story is told in terms of entertainment, it offers considerable food for thought on the importance of learning to live together in harmony:—

Led by Cochise, their leader, the Apache Indians wage constant war on the white men, who had once made peace with them but had broken their word. Stewart, a far-sighted frontiersman, who realized that the white men had not dealt fairly with the Apaches, boldly decides to visit Cochise for a peace talk. He learns to speak the Apache dialect and through smoke signals, makes known his wish to confer with Cochise. The Apache leader permits him into the encampment and, after a brief talk, senses that Stewart is a man to be trusted. Still suspicious but susceptible to the idea of peace, Cochise, as a token demonstration of his good faith, guarantees safe passage for the U. S. Mail riders through the territory. When Stewart tells the white men of this, they refuse to believe him, but they change their attitude when the mail riders go through unmolested. Cochise, however, continues battling the other whites, even wiping out an American military detachment. President Grant, eager for a fair peace with the Apaches, sends Basil Ruysdael, a general, to Arizona. Stewart arranges a peace conference, which results in the acceptance of a truce by all the Apache tribes except those led by Geronimo. Meanwhile Stewart falls in love with Debra and wins Cochise's consent to marry her and stay at the encampment. Dissatisfied with the truce, a group of hate-ridden whites, led by Will Geer, trick Stewart, Debra and Cochise into an ambush. Cochise escapes, but Debra is killed and Stewart wounded. Stewart, in his grief and wrath, wants to avenge Debra's death by an all-out war against the whites, but Cochise quiets him down, pointing out that the attack was the work, not of the military, but of renegade whites who, like Geronimo and his renegades, had violated the peace.

It was produced by Julian Blaustein and directed by Delmer Daves from a screen play by Michael Blankfort, based on Elliott Arnold's novel, "Blood Brother."

Excellent for the family.

"Panic in the Streets" with Richard Widmark, Paul Douglas and Barbara Bel Geddes

(20th Century-Fox, September; time, 93 min.)

By virtue of a tightly-woven screen play, excellent direction and competent acting, this melodrama emerges as a taut, absorbing thriller that should make its mark at the box office. It is a chase story, revolving around a police hunt for several murderers who were unknowingly contaminated with bubonic plague, and who had to be captured lest they spread the disease. The melodramatic action is kept at a feverish pace, and the suspense is maintained from start to finish as the police, aided by a U. S. Public Health officer, carry on the hunt in secrecy so as not to frighten the populace. Of the many exciting and suspenseful scenes, the most effective ones occur towards the finish, where the criminals are trapped in a huge dock warehouse and are either apprehended or killed. Much of the picture's effectiveness is owed to the documentary-like treatment and the actual New Orleans backgrounds, as well as the unusually good camera work:—

Having lost money in a poker game to Louis Charles, newly arrived in New Orleans illegally, Jack Pulanz, Zero Mostel and Guy Thomajan rob and kill him. When the body is found an autopsy discloses that the man had been

suffering from bubonic plague. The police notify Richard Widmark, a doctor with the U. S. Public Health Service, who orders the body burned immediately and sees to it that all persons known to have had contact with it are inoculated. He then arranges a conference with the heads of the city government and points out to them the importance of catching the slayers quickly lest they unknowingly spread the disease. Widmark insists that the reason for the hunt be kept secret even from the newspapers lest people flee the city and endanger the entire nation. Paul Douglas, captain of the homicide squad, is assigned to the case. He rounds up all questionable characters, but this procedure comes to nothing. Widmark, dismayed by the lack of results, takes a hand in the investigation himself, much to Douglas' annoyance. He succeeds in tracking down a fisherman who had smuggled the dead man into the country, and learns that he had been an Armenian. With this meager information, Widmark and Douglas begin a canvass of the city's Armenian restaurants, and their intensive search uncovers clues that help them to identify the three thugs, one of whom had become deathly ill with the plague. The other two become panicky and flee to the docks to escape in an outgoing freighter, but alert work by Widmark and Douglas brings about their capture. The public's safety assured, Widmark returns home to Barbara Bel Geddes, his admiring wife, for a well-earned rest.

It was produced by Sol C. Siegel and directed by Elia Kazan from a screen play by Richard Murphy, based on a story by Edna and Edward Anhalt.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The Great Jewel Robber" with David Brian and Marjorie Reynolds

(Warner Bros., July 15; time, 91 min.)

A fairly interesting crook melodrama, supposedly biographical of the criminal career of Gerard Dennis, the widely publicized thief, who is now serving a prison term of eighteen years. Dennis, effectively portrayed by David Brian, is shown as a suave crook who used many women as dupes to further his schemes. Although it is supposed to be based on fact, the story follows a conventional line for pictures of this type, and offers little that is unusual, but it manages to hold one's interest fairly well since it moves along at a fast and somewhat exciting pace.

The story opens with Dennis being turned over to the Canadian police by the irate father of Claudia Barrett, who objected to the attention he was paying to her. He breaks out of prison and, on a promise of marriage, bluffs Claudia into handing him her money and jewels. He then makes his way to Buffalo with the aid of Perdita Chandler, who introduces him to a crime set-up. But his experiences there end disastrously when he tries a doublecross and is sent to the hospital with a broken jaw. There, Marjorie Reynolds, his nurse, falls in love with him. He marries her upon his recovery and goes to New Rochelle where, based on information she had given him, he robs wealthy homes. While living with Marjorie, who believed that he had reformed, Dennis takes up with Alice Talton, a sexy fur model, when he tries to dispose of some stolen gems in New York. Marjorie, discovering his infidelity, informs the police of his whereabouts, but he manages to escape the trap set for him, after giving Marjorie a beating. He goes to Los Angeles, where he wins the love of Jacqueline De Witt, a wealthy widow, and uses her hospitality to rob her wealthy friends. In due time, however, the police catch up with him and return him to New Rochelle, where he again makes a daring escape, but he is nabbed within a few hours and sent to prison.

It was produced by Bryan Foy and directed by Peter Godfrey from a screen play by Borden Chase.

Adult fare.

"Johnny One-Eye" with Pat O'Brien, Wayne Morris and Dolores Moran

(United Artists, May 5; time, 78 min.)

This crime melodrama has its moments of excitement, but it is weak in entertainment values and will have to depend on Pat O'Brien's name. Adapted from Damon Runyon's story of the same name, the plot is a confused mixture of crooked politics, underworld intrigue, and personal revenge between rival racketeers, with a touch of sentimentalism introduced by having one of the racketeers show compassion for a mistreated dog and sacrificing his life to save a little girl from harm at the end. The action fails to hold a tight grip on one's interest, first, because of the slow-paced direction, and secondly, because of the arty approach, which serves only to make some of the characters appear ludicrous. Moreover, it is demoralizing, for it attempts to win sympathy for worthless characters:—

Pat O'Brien, a big-time racketeer, eludes the police when the district attorney tries to arrest him for a murder committed five years previously. He learns that Wayne Morris, his former partner-in-crime, seeking protection, had made a deal with the politically ambitious district attorney to put him (O'Brien) on the spot. Determined to make Morris change his story, O'Brien tracks him to a burlesque theatre, where he was producing a show built around Dolores Moran, his mistress. In the argument that ensues, O'Brien kills one of Morris' bodyguards and is wounded himself. Hunted by the police for this latest killing, and weakened by the bullet wound, O'Brien hides out in an abandoned apartment building. Meanwhile Morris, fearing that O'Brien is on his trail, holes up in the apartment of Dolores, who lived there with Gayle Reed, her six-year-old daughter. Morris, his nerves unravelled, kicks Gayle's little dog, injuring its eye. The suffering dog, thrown out by Morris, makes its way to the abandoned building where O'Brien lies wounded. Gayle, searching for her pet, finds him with O'Brien on the following morning. O'Brien becomes friendly with the child, unaware that she is Dolores' daughter, and he jeopardizes his own safety to give the dog medical aid. In the complicated events that follow, Morris learns of O'Brien's whereabouts through an inadvertent remark made by Gayle, and he sets out to kill him. The child rushes to warn O'Brien and becomes trapped in the rotten flooring, directly in the line of fire between O'Brien and Morris. To save her, O'Brien shifts his position, and both men kill each other in an exchange of shots.

It was produced by Benedict Bogeaus and directed by Robert Florey, from a screen play by Richard H. Landau. Adult fare.

"The White Tower" with Glenn Ford, Valli and Claude Rains

(RKO, June 24; time, 98 min.)

A fascinating, thrill-packed drama, revolving around an oddly-assorted group of five men and a woman who combine their efforts in a daring attempt to climb a towering mountain never before scaled by man. After a slow start to establish the character and backgrounds of the different mountain climbers, the action offers some of the most thrilling moments ever filmed as they make the perilous ascent. Some of the scenes have been staged so well that they will leave an audience trembling with excitement and terror. The story itself is engrossing and powerfully dramatic in its analysis of the different characters, their motivations, and the personal conflicts among them as they risk their lives in the struggle to conquer the mountain. Filmed entirely in the Swiss Alps and photographed in Technicolor, the picture is noteworthy for its breathtakingly magnificent scenic backgrounds. Word-of-mouth advertising should help the picture at the box-office:—

Glenn Ford, an American vacationing in a Swiss village, meets an oddly-assorted group, all of whom have one burning desire—to climb the White Tower, a forbidding mountain. They include Valli, an Italian girl whose father had died in an attempt to reach the peak; Claude Rains, a French author, who was weary of the world and of his nagging wife; Oscar Homolka, an elderly Swiss guide; Sir Cedric Hardwicke, an English botanist; and Lloyd Bridges, a former Nazi officer, the most expert climber of the group. Although he saw no point in attempting the perilous ascent, Ford's interest in Valli and his dislike for Bridges' arrogance lead him to join the group. On the second day of the treacherous climb, Hardwicke, exhausted, drops out. Two-thirds of the way up Rains, too, quits, promising to wait on a sheltered ridge until the others return. In their absence, however, he commits suicide. As the remaining foursome reach their last camp before the final stretch to the summit, a violent snow storm comes up and Homolka orders them to wait one day until the snow packs down. Bridges, scoffing at the "softness" of the others, heads for the summit alone, despite being told that each needed the help of the others to make it. Ford, fed up with Bridges' pretensions of Nazi supremacy, follows and overtakes him at a spot requiring mutual help to get across. Scorning Ford's offer to help, Bridges tries to make it alone and falls screaming to his death. Ford crosses safely, but as he nears the peak an attack of snow blindness renders him helpless. He is found by Valli and Homolka who, rather than fulfill their lifelong dream of reaching the summit, lead Ford safely down the mountain before a new blizzard strikes. The experience brings a new understanding between Valli and Ford, and they marry as soon as he regains his sight.

It was produced by Sid Rogell and directed by Ted Tetzlaff from a screen play by Paul Jarrico, based on the novel by James Ramsey Ullman. Suitable for the family.

"Duchess of Idaho" with Esther Williams, Van Johnson and John Lund

(MGM, July; time, 98 min.)

An elaborate and enjoyable romantic comedy-farce, peppered with musical interludes and photographed in Technicolor. The story is thin, but it is diverting and relaxing, and has plenty of movement and laughs. Moreover, there is considerable eye-appeal in the lavishly staged water ballets, featuring Esther Williams, and in the extraordinary beautiful backgrounds of Sun Valley, Idaho, where most of the action takes place. In addition to Miss Williams, Van Johnson, Paula Raymond and John Lund, the principals in the story's amusing romantic involvements, the picture offers Lena Horne, in a song number, and Eleanor Powell, in a tap dance routine, as well as Connie Haines, who sings several songs with Van Johnson. Red Skelton appears briefly in an amusing bit. All in all, its mixture of romance, comedy and music follows a familiar but sure-fire formula that has satisfied audiences in the past:—

Esther, star of her own water ballet, rooms together with Paula, secretary to Lund, a handsome railroad tycoon. Paula's duties included posing as Lund's fiancée every time he got himself into a jam with a woman who wanted to marry him. Esther, aware that Paula loves Lund, decides on a plan to trap him for her. Since Lund had never met her, Esther follows him to Sun Valley, when he goes there for a vacation, and deliberately sets out to get him romantically involved with her so that he will send for Paula to rescue him. Matters become complicated, however, when Esther falls in love with Van Johnson, the bandleader at the hotel, but continues her pretended romance with Lund to help out Paula. The situation becomes even more mixed up when Paula arrives unexpectedly and Lund, discovering the ruse, deliberately makes it appear as if Esther had really fallen in love with him, thus upsetting her romance with Johnson. Both men become furious with the girls, but in the end the misunderstandings are cleared up and each girl gets her man.

It was produced by Joe Pasternak and directed by Robert Z. Leonard from a screen play by Dorothy Cooper and Jerry Davis.

Fine for the family.

"Peggy" with Diana Lynn, Charles Coburn and Charlotte Greenwood

(Univ.-Int'l, July; time, 77 min.)

Although not exceptional, this Technicolor comedy-farce is a pleasant enough entertainment to get by with family audiences. Revolving around the mixups that occur when the two pretty daughters of a retired professor enter the Rose Queen contest in the annual Tournament of Roses, the story itself is flimsy and the comedy labored. There are few genuine laughs in the situations, which rarely evoke much more than some chuckles. The picture is given a considerable lift by the colorful Pasadena backgrounds, particularly the Tournament of Roses parade at the finish, all enhanced by the fine Technicolor photography:—

Having quit Ohio State University, Charles Coburn, a professor, arrives in Pasadena with his two daughters (Diana Lynn and Barbara Lawrence) to live in retirement while the girls attend Pasadena City College. Charlotte Greenwood, a widowed neighbor, takes a big interest in the welfare of the newcomers, much to Coburn's annoyance. Charles Drake, Charlotte's son, takes a shine to Diana, unaware that she is secretly married to Rock Hudson, an Ohio State fullback, whom her father considered a nincompoop. Complications set in when the girls, as coeds, are required to enter the Rose Queen competition, and Diana learns that married women are ineligible. She does everything she can to lose out in the contest, but together with Barbara survives successive eliminations. Meanwhile Drake shifts his attentions to Barbara. On the day the Rose Queen is to be selected from among five finalists, including Diana and Barbara, Hudson arrives with his football team to play in the Rose Bowl. He and Diana decide to reveal their marriage, but before they can do so Coburn finds Diana's wedding band. Barbara, to protect Diana, claims that the ring is hers, and that she had eloped with Drake. The judges, having selected Barbara as the Rose Queen, shift the award to Diana, but she bursts in, proves her marriage, and makes them give the award back to Barbara. Reconciled to Diana's marriage, Coburn sets about warding off Charlotte's romantic overtures.

Ralph Dietrich produced it, and Frederick de Cordova directed it, from a screen play by George F. Slavin and George W. George, based on a story by Leon Ware.

Good for the family.

"Sideshow" with Don McGuire and Tracey Roberts

(Monogram, June 18; time, 67 min.)

Good program fare. The action is fast and the background novel, for the story deals with the efforts of Treasury Department agents to apprehend gem smugglers among the members of a carnival show. The action keeps one mystified, for one does not know who the villains are until late in the story. There is considerable suspense, for the life of the hero is placed in danger constantly. The reproduction of the carnival show is realistic, and should prove of interest to the majority of picture-goers, particularly to children. The direction and acting are good, but the proceedings are at times confusing because of the imperfect script. The photography is good though at times somber:—

Don McGuire, a Treasury Agent on the trail of a jewel smuggling gang, finds evidence indicating that several of the gang members are working in a carnival show owned by Ray Walker. With the aid of two fellow agents, whom he "beats up" when they deliberately start an argument with Tracey Roberts, the ticket seller, McGuire obtains a job with the carnival as a handy-man. McGuire's suspicions fall on Walker, Jimmy Conlin, the candy peddler, and John Abbott, operator of the carnival's wax museum, but he cannot arrest them until he finds proof of their smuggling activities. In the course of his secret investigation, McGuire becomes friendly with Tracey and with Eddie Quillan, a member of the show and, convinced that they are not members of the gang, reveals his identity and enlists their aid. Quillan, caught spying by the smugglers, is murdered. In due time McGuire catches Conlin trying to sell some of the gems and, through him, learns that the jewels were hidden in wax figures, from which they were picked up by stooges and delivered to "fences." Just as McGuire finds a fortune in gems hidden in the head of a wax figure, Walker confronts him with a gun. McGuire manages to come to grips with him, but Walker breaks loose. McGuire pursues him up the scaffolding of a scenic railway and catches him in one of the cars, which takes off at breakneck speed while they continue their fight. Walker is jerked off the car and falls to his death. Abbott, too, is killed when McGuire's fellow agents close in on the rest of the gang. It ends with McGuire and Tracey presumably headed for the altar.

The story was written by William F. Broidy and put into screen play form by Sam Roeca. The author produced it and Jean Yarbrough directed it.

Good for the family.

"The Avengers" with John Carroll, Adele Mara and Mona Maris

(Republic, June 26; time, 90 min.)

Unquestionably, "The Avengers" will prove acceptable to action-seeking patrons, for there is adventure, swash-buckling, mob scenes, chases, and all the other ingredients that tend to excite such patrons. But a meritorious script could have obtained better results, for there is confusion as to who is on whose side. There are times when one does not know whom a mob is fighting for, and things happen that are not accounted for. The confusion may be the result of bad editing. The picture was photographed entirely in Argentina:—

The lure of gold in the New World swells the ranks of the bandits to such proportions that they are able to match arms with the military. Terrorizing the inhabitants of a Spanish colony on the Northwest Coast of South America is Vincent Padula, who hides his features behind a gruesome mask when he and his cutthroats attack the people. Years later, Padula becomes an aide to power-mad Roberto Airaldi, who was engaged to Adele Mara, daughter of Jorge Villolda, the colony's governor. Villolda trusted both men implicitly, unaware that they were secretly planning to capture the reins of government from him. John Carroll, who years previously had sworn revenge on Padula for having killed his father, now heads a band of young caballeros, known as the Avengers, who risked their lives to protect the common people. One day Carroll encounters Airaldi just

as he is about to take advantage of Fernando Lamas, a French colonist. Carroll saves Lamas' life. Although his pride is hurt, Airaldi decides that he can use Carroll, who had boasted of his success with women. Airaldi, seeking to marry Mona Maris, his mistress, lures Carroll into accepting a wager to make good his boast on Adele or to become his servant if he failed. Airaldi felt that, even if Carroll wins Adele as his wife, her father would still make him (Airaldi) ruler of the colony. Carroll soon wins Adele's heart, but being a man of honor he refuses to hoodwink her any longer and offers to become Airaldi's servant. Mona, disturbed by this turn of events, reveals to Adele the nature of the wager. Enraged, Adele refuses to marry Airaldi under any circumstances, but she still loves Carroll, although furious at him. With the wedding cancelled, the governor decides to retain his powers. Airaldi, aided by Padula, seizes power and kills the governor in the process. Adele escapes and goes to Carroll for help. Carroll, aided by Lamas, brings about the death of Airaldi and Padula, and turns the power over to the proper authorities. Carroll and Adele marry.

John H. Auer produced and directed it, from a screen play by Lawrence Kimble and Aeneas McKenzie, based on Rex Beach's novel, "Don Careless."

Suitable for the family.

"Rogues of Sherwood Forest" with John Derek and Diana Lynn

(Columbia, July; time, 80 min.)

This "Robin Hood" costume melodrama, photographed in Technicolor, is a fair entertainment of its kind, no better and no worse than similar productions that Columbia has made in recent years. Except for the fact that the hero is the son of "Robin Hood," the story and treatment offer little that is novel; it follows the usual pattern of the hero and his friends rising to the defense of the oppressed people when the treacherous King levies unjust taxes against them. The heroics are on the incredible side, but it has all the swordplay and derring-do that one expects to see in a motion picture of this type, and for that reason should satisfy the indiscriminating action fans, particularly the juveniles. As "Robin Hood, Jr.," John Derek cuts an heroic figure, giving the part all the dash it requires. Some of the settings are easily recognizable as having been used in previous pictures:—

Recognized as one of the noblest lords in England, and as famous as his father before him, Derek is disliked by George Macready, the King, who together with Lowell Gilmore and Paul Cavanagh, his treacherous aides, makes an attempt on Derek's life. Derek, however, foils their plot. Later, when the King, with the connivance of Gilmore and Cavanagh, levies unjust taxes against the people, Derek defends his tenants and kills two of the King's guards. He is captured and brought to the castle to be hanged, but Diana Lynn, the King's ward, helps him to escape on the day he is to die. Derek hides out in Sherwood Forest, where he brings together his father's old friends, who help him to harass the King on every hand. Diana keeps Derek informed of the King's plans by carrier pigeon, and in this way he learns that the King is plotting treachery against the country's wealthiest barons to deprive them of their money and lands. His efforts to warn the barons of their danger prove futile until two of them are murdered by the King's guards. The barons then join Derek in his efforts to combat the King. Meanwhile the King, desperate for money, promises Diana in marriage to Gilmore, an immensely wealthy man. Derek and the barons intercept the marriage procession as it passes through Sherwood Forest. In the battle that follows, Gilmore and Cavanagh are killed, the King's guards subdued, and the King himself captured and compelled to sign the famous Magna Charta. With the people freed from oppression, Derek claims Diana as his bride.

It was produced by Fred M. Packard and directed by Gordon Douglas from a screen play by George Bruce, based on a story by Ralph Bettinson. The cast includes Alan Hale, Billy House and others.

Suitable for the family.

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A DOUBLE-BARRELED BLAST AT PRODUCTION-DISTRIBUTION

Charging that Hollywood "has lost its ability to correctly assay the motion picture market," and that there is "a well-organized plan at the top of distribution to gouge every last dollar out of the exhibitor's till," Trueman T. Rembusch, president of National Allied, speaking at the Allied of New Jersey convention in Atlantic City last Friday, lashed out at both production and distribution in a hard-hitting speech that minced no words and named names.

In his remarks about production's responsibility for declining grosses, Mr. Rembusch had this to say, in part:

"I believe that one reason for production losing that box-office knowhow is that it is more interested in making pictures for the critics while always keeping an eye directed towards Academy Awards rather than on theatre box-office. People in production are placing too much emphasis on winning Academy Awards. If you want proof of the lack of box-office effectiveness of Academy Award pictures, ponder the performances of the runner-up and winner of the Award, 'The Heiress' and 'All the King's Men.' 'Ma and Pa Kettle Go to Town' and 'The Yellow Cab Man' will never receive good critical reviews, neither will they receive Academy Awards, but they turned in healthy national grosses.

"Production will not regain its Midas touch in producing pictures until it seeks suggestions and assistance from distribution and exhibition toward establishing a new standard which, naturally, will include abandonment of releasing cycles simultaneously dealing with the same theme, such as the present cycle of de luxe Westerns and pictures on disease."

In taking Hollywood to task for the weak showing of many pictures at the box-office, Mr. Rembusch echoed the sentiments of many exhibitors who are of the opinion that there are altogether too many pictures with depressing themes, as well as too many of the same variety, like Westerns. Ask the exhibitors what kind of pictures they prefer and most of them will tell you that they want family-type entertainment, cheerful pictures that put movie-goers in a happy frame of mind, for under such a frame of mind they go to the theatre more frequently.

What is needed are more pictures like MGM's "Father of the Bride" and "Annie Get Your Gun," 20th Century-Fox's "Cheaper by the Dozen," and Universal-International's forthcoming "Louisa," to mention just a few. Pictures like these do an immense amount of good, for those who see them go out of the theatre singing the praises of the motion picture industry.

As to Mr. Rembusch's thoughts on the ineffective box-office value of pictures that aim for Academy Awards, he is not alone; last week, Barney Balaban, in his talk before the Paramount sales convention in Los Angeles, had this to say about arty, highly-praised pictures:

"The picture is made beautifully, but when it reaches the market we lose money on it. This experience has been repeated time and again. We simply cannot afford to have

any more of them, no matter how gratifying the plaudits of the critics may be. Price, Waterhouse & Company doesn't read the reviews in making up our profit and loss statement."

In his blast against the distributors' selling policies, Mr. Rembusch declared that, after discussions with Allied leaders in different parts of the country, he had come to the conclusion that "there is an avaricious force at work within our industry, a force that must be met with force. If that grasping, confiscatory force is not stemmed, every exhibitor will face bankruptcy."

He pointed out that, two years ago, the distributors were happy to get 20 to 25% from drive-ins as gross film rental. Last year, he said, they demanded from 25 to 35%. And this year, he claimed, some distributors are demanding as high as 50% of both indoor and outdoor theatres.

He singled out for criticism Columbia, MGM and Paramount, and charged that Columbia lost from \$2,000,000 to \$2,500,000 in revenue because of its short-sighted early selling policy in connection with "Jolson Sings Again"; that MGM is not only seeking percentage terms in all situations on "Battleground" and "Annie Get Your Gun," but that the company has taken away from its exchanges the authority to allocate terms; and that Paramount was resorting to "coercion" to make exhibitors increase admission prices on "Samson and Delilah."

Mr. Rembusch's charge that the exhibitors are being "gouged" by current sales policies brings to mind the following significant remarks made by Jay Emanuel, publisher of *The Exhibitor*, on the editorial page of his May 24 issue, under the title, "Heading in Two Directions":

"If one were to chart the current industry picture, one line would head downwards while the other will head upwards. The former would indicate grosses while the latter would reflect rising film prices.

"In this industry, such a situation doesn't make sense. At a time when business is definitely off, there is no reason why distributors should figure their returns should be higher. Still, faced with this picture, and knowing well that for the first time in years, many theatres and drive-ins are available for purchase or rental, than at any time in the history of this business, and that many houses are beginning to close for the summer months, a practice which hasn't been seen in many areas since the '30's, the distributors ask terms which even during the prosperous war years would be considered high.

"If one were to make a survey of the amount of money tied up in unsold possibilities, this would probably prove an eye-opener in the case of some distributors. Still, the sales departments hold out until, when the dam eventually breaks, the value of the film is lessened.

"For a while, there was a shot in the arm actuated by the sincere attempt of one company to bring a showmanship rebirth to the industry. But there has been no change in what the many distributors feel they ought to get. If anything, terms being asked are higher, even in the face of the decline.

(Continued on back page)

"The Flame and the Arrow" with Burt Lancaster and Virginia Mayo

(Warner Bros., July 22; time, 88 min.)

Very good! It is a lusty, top-flight swashbuckling romantic melodrama, photographed in Technicolor and briskly played against impressive medieval backgrounds. The story itself is neither strong nor original, being the conventional one about an oppressed people, led by a dashing hero, rising against the despotic rule of a heartless nobleman, but the action is so fast and the feats of derring-do so imaginative and thrilling that one does not notice the plot's lack of surprises. The swordplay, the deadly bow-and-arrow marksmanship, and the extraordinary acrobatic feats of the hero and his mute friend as they clash with the castle guards and lead them a merry chase through the castle and over rooftops, make for some of the most breathtaking "hokum" seen on the screen in a long time. The action fans should "eat it up," and it should be enjoyed also by others who are willing to accept the picture for the so-called "escapist" entertainment that it is. Burt Lancaster, as the hero, is excellent; athletically impressive, he gives the part just the right touch of dash and leaps about with an agility that would have done even the late Douglas Fairbanks proud:—

Lancaster, a free man of the mountains, and Gordon Gebert, his seven-year-old son, come down to a city in ancient Italy on the day that Frank Allenby, a Hessian nobleman, returns with fresh troops to reinforce his control of the rebellious and unhappy district. Lynne Baggett, Lancaster's petulant wife, had become Allenby's consort five years previously, and Lancaster wanted the boy to see his mother and form and strong hatred for the invader. Lancaster insults Allenby and incites a riot, during which his son is captured and taken with his mother to Allenby's castle. Lancaster retreats to a mountain hideout with his followers and, several days later, accompanied by Nick Cravet, his mute friend, raids the castle in a daring effort to recover the boy. The attempt fails, but Lancaster succeeds in capturing Virginia Mayo, Allenby's pretty niece, whom he takes to the hideout as hostage for the boy. Allenby, however, compels him to release Virginia by threatening to hang a close friend. In the events that follow Lancaster permits himself to be captured and, through a clever ruse, leads Allenby to believe that he had been hanged. He and his friends disguise themselves as acrobats and join a traveling troupe that had arranged to perform in the castle that night. Once in the castle, Lancaster, backed by the townspeople, launches a full-scale attack that brings about the deaths of Allenby and Lynne, the rescue of the boy and the liberation of the people, as well as the start of a romance between Virginia and Lancaster.

It was produced by Harold Hecht and Frank Ross, and directed by Jacques Tourneur, from an original screenplay by Waldo Salt.

Fine for the family.

"Where Danger Lives" with Robert Mitchum, Faith Domergue and Claude Rains

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 84 min.)

Hampered by a story that is rambling, fuzzy and lacking in dramatic credibility, "Where Danger Lives" shapes up as no more than a mildly interesting melodrama that is not particularly exciting. Being a chase melodrama, in which the two principals elude the police in an effort to cross the border into Mexico, the picture does have its moments of suspense, but there are not enough of them to grip one's attention. Moreover, one guesses in advance just how the action will unfold. Its box-office chances will have to depend on the popularity of Robert Mitchum and the value of the build-up that RKO is now giving to Faith Domergue, who makes her debut in this picture. She is an attractive personality and shows signs of being a capable actress, but the script doesn't give her much of a chance. Claude Rains' part in the picture is confined to a brief appearance in the beginning:—

Mitchum, a doctor, forgets his romance with Maureen O'Sullivan, a nurse, when he falls in love with Faith, an exotic beauty, whose life he had saved after an attempted suicide. When she evades his proposals of marriage by saying that Claude Rains, her "father," objected, Mitchum, slightly drunk, goes to her home for a showdown. There he discovers that Rains is her husband. Rains tries to explain that Faith is a mental case, but Mitchum, drunk and belligerent, won't listen. The two men quarrel, with Rains knocked unconscious when he strikes Mitchum with an andiron. Recovering from the blow, Mitchum finds Rains dead, unaware that Faith had suffocated him with a pillow. Faith, leading Mitchum to believe that he had killed Rains, induces him to flee with her. As they head for the Mexican border, Mitchum realizes that he had suffered a concussion and would become paralyzed within twenty-four hours without proper medical care, but they dare not stop for fear of the police. They finally reach the border town of Nogales after a wild flight, and find the authorities searching for them. They go into hiding and make a deal with local crooks to smuggle them across the border that night. Worried over the possibility of arrest and finding the partially paralyzed Mitchum a handicap, Faith becomes mentally unbalanced, tells him of her condition, and confesses that she had killed Rains. She then smothers Mitchum with a pillow and, leaving him for dead, goes off to keep the rendezvous with the smugglers. Mitchum recovers and, with his last ounce of strength, manages to catch up with her at the international gate. She tries to shoot him but is shot herself by an alert officer. As she dies, she clears Mitchum of the murder charge.

It was produced by Irving Cummings, Jr. and directed by John Farrow from a screen play by Charles Bennett, based on a story by Leo Rosten.

Adult fare.

"Kill or Be Killed" with Lawrence Tierney (Eagle Lion, April; time, 66 min.)

A poor program picture. The story is bad, the screenplay equally so, and the direction unimpressive. The scenes where the police are shown chasing the hero may satisfy those who like melodramatic action, regardless of logic. The photography is dark but clear. The picture may suffice for the lower half of a double bill in third-rate theatres:—

Having completed a job in a South American seaport town, Lawrence Tierney, an American engineer, demands payment from Lopes Da Silva, his employer. Da Silva retires to his office and, when he fails to reappear, Tierney, impatient, enters and finds him murdered. When the police accuse him of the crime, Tierney, feeling that circumstantial evidence is against him, escapes in order that he might be able to establish his innocence. The police shoot Tierney during the chase that follows and abandon the pursuit in the belief that he had died in the river. But Tierney, merely wounded, quietly boards a steamship owned by Rudolph Anders as it starts downstream. On the ship he meets Marissa O'Brien, Anders' wife, and convinces her that he is not a criminal. She hides him and they fall in love during the trip. Kicked off the boat as a stowaway, Tierney obtains a job with one of Anders' jungle plantation labor gangs. Meanwhile George Coulouris, Anders' henchman, reports to Anders that he need no longer fear Da Silva, a black-mailer, for he had murdered him and had put the blame on an American engineer, who had been killed by the police while attempting to flee. In the jungle, Tierney leads his fellow-workers in a revolt to compel Anders to supply medicine for snake bites, and thus comes to Anders' attention as the man who was wanted for Da Silva's murder. And when Anders learns that his wife is in love with Tierney, he orders Coulouris to kill him. In the complicated events that follow, Coulouris attempts to throw Tierney into shark-infested waters only to be thrown in himself. Tierney pulls Coulouris back into the boat, but the man, dying from shark bites, confesses the truth about Da Silva's murder. Anders, confronted by Tierney with this knowledge, attempts to shoot him, but an abused houseboy shoots and kills Anders before he can fire at Tierney. Marissa rushes into Tierney's arms, happy to find him alive.

It was produced by Walter Jurmann and directed by Max Nosseck, who collaborated on the writing of the original screen play with Arnold Phillips and Lawrence Goldman.

Adult fare.

"Crisis" with Cary Grant, Jose Ferrer, Paula Raymond and Signe Hasso

(MGM, June; time, 96 min.)

Distinguished by an out-of-the-ordinary story and by fine acting this melodrama is interesting and somewhat unusual, but as entertainment many movie-goers may find its mood too depressing and grim. Laid in an unidentified Latin-American country and backgrounded by a revolution, the plot points up the dilemma of an American brain surgeon who, kidnapped in order to operate on the hated dictator, does so for ethical reasons although he loathes everything the man stands for. There is considerable suspense, brought about by the fact that the revolutionists threaten to harm the doctor's wife if the operation proves successful and the dictator lives. The writing is somewhat uneven and there are stretches where the action drags because of excessive talk, but on the whole it has a fascinating quality. One sequence, where the doctor rehearses the brain operation with a dummy head, is so gruesome that it will make the squeamish turn their eyes away from the screen:—

Honeymooning with Paula Raymond, his bride, Cary Grant, a famous American brain surgeon, decides to return to the United States when the Latin American country they are visiting shows signs of a revolution. En route to their ship, they are halted by armed soldiers and, despite Grant's indignant protests, are taken to the presidential palace. There Grant learns for the first time that Jose Ferrer, the country's hated dictator, is desperately ill with a brain tumor. Signe Hasso, Ferrer's wife, explains that other American brain doctors were unwilling to come to her husband's aid, and that he (Grant) had been kidnapped to perform the delicate operation. Through Leon Ames, an American who had lived in the country for years, Grant learns that Ferrer is an evil tyrant and that the revolutionists, headed by Gilbert Roland, opposed his being given medical aid. But Grant, abiding by his ethics as a doctor, insists that he must perform the operation. On the day the operation is to take place, the revolutionists kidnap Paula as she departs for the United States, and send a note to Grant stating that she will die if he saves Ferrer's life. Signe intercepts the note and destroys it. Four days after the operation, Ferrer shows so much improvement that he gives Grant his freedom. Grant, visiting Ames to say goodbye, learns of the note and of Paula's plight. Assured by Roland that Paula still lived but that her well being depended on Ferrer's death, Grant storms back into the palace to demand an explanation about the destroyed note. Meanwhile the revolutionists, believing that Ferrer is already dead, break into the palace and kill Signe. The excitement proves too much for Ferrer, because of his operation, and he falls dead as he threatens to shoot Grant. Roland, after bringing Paula to Grant, brags that it is his day to rule. Just then a bullet brings him down. As he pleads with Grant to save him, Grant remarks that no matter who the dictator is, it is the same old cry of "Save me, Doctor!"

It was produced by Arthur Freed and directed by Richard Brooks from his own screen play, based on a story by George Tabori.

Unobjectionable morally, but best suited for mature audiences.

"50 Years Before Your Eyes"

(Warner Bros., July 29; time, 70 min.)

"50 Years Before Your Eyes" is an interesting documentary compilation of selected newsreel and library clips depicting the memorable events and personalities of the past 50 years in world history. Similar in format and presentation to the March of Time's "The Golden Twenties," it should, like that picture, make a good supporting feature. Some of the footage is familiar, but on the whole it shapes up as a comprehensive pictorial study of the highlights of the past five decades. The picture should serve as an entertaining lesson in history to the youngsters and bring back memories of the past to their elders.

The picture starts off with the inauguration of President McKinley in 1901 and follows history throughout the fifty years with the depiction of such events as the San Francisco fire; the funeral of Queen Victoria; Teddy Roosevelt in Africa; Pershing's expedition against Pancho Villa; World War I and the mammoth victory parades; Wilson and the League of Nations; the Prince of Wales' visit to America and, in later years, his abdication of the throne; candidates

Cox and FDR conceding victory to President Harding; Lindberg's flight across the Atlantic; the rise and fall of Hitler and Mussolini; the 1929 stock market crash; FDR's inaugural; the beginning of World War II; the Battle of Britain; Pearl Harbor; FDR's funeral; the atom bomb; the eventual armistice and formation of the United Nations; and many other events too numerous to mention. Additionally, there are shots of famous personalities in the fields of sports, theatre, films, fashions, politics and labor.

The entire footage is narrated by nine commentators, including Arthur Godfrey, Quentin Reynolds, H. V. Kaltenborn, Clem McCarthy, Andre Baruch, Norman Brokenshire, Milton J. Cross, Dwight Weist and Dan Donaldson. It was produced by Alfred Butterfield who wrote the script in collaboration with Thomas H. Wolf. It was directed by Robert G. Youngson.

"Treasure Island" with Bobby Driscoll and Robert Newton

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 96 min.)

This latest screen version of Robert Louis Stevenson's immortal tale of piracy and buried treasure is a first-rate adventure melodrama that should thrill young and old alike, even if they have never read the classic novel, for it is adventurous, exciting and human, with fine touches of comedy. The picture is Walt Disney's first all live-action production he deserves the highest praise for the artistry with which he has handled this ageless adventure yarn. The production end, enhanced by the beautiful Technicolor photography, is excellent, and the acting is of the highest order. The scenes of mutiny aboard the ship and the seesaw battles on the island between the pirates and the honest adventurers have been staged most effectively, generating considerable suspense. The picture was made in England and, except for Bobby Driscoll, who does a fine job as young "Jim Hawkins," the entire cast is made up of British players, headed by Robert Newton, whose characterization as "Long John Silver," the one-legged pirate leader, is superb. He plays the part to the hilt, making a thorough scoundrel of the character, but he manages to win some measure of sympathy because of the attachment he shows for young Bobby and the manner in which he protects him against his cutthroat companions. There are no women in the cast:—

Bobby, son of a widowed innkeeper, comes into possession of a map giving the location of buried treasure when it is given to him for safekeeping by Finlay Currie, an aged pirate, just before he is murdered by former companions. Denis O'Dea, the local doctor, and Walter Fitzgerald, the village squire, recognize the authenticity of the map and outfit a square-rigger, the *Hispaniola*, and set sail for the secret island with Basil Sidney, the captain, in command. Bobby, who is to share in the fortune, goes along as cabin boy. Unknown to all, the crew, a motley lot headed by Newton, were the murdered pirate's old shipmates who knew about the map. Newton ingratiates himself with Bobby and his friends, all the while plotting a mutiny once the island is reached. Bobby, believing in Newton, is shocked when he overhears him plotting and warns the captain. Sidney takes immediate steps to keep the crew under control, but once the ship anchors off the island Newton and his cutthroats outmaneuver the others, taking Bobby as hostage as they go ashore. Bobby escapes and, with the aid of Geoffrey Wilkinson, a demented pirate who had been left stranded on the island years previously, manages to hide out. While the pirates search for Bobby, the others come ashore and defend themselves against continuing attacks for possession of the map. During the course of the battle, Bobby slips back to the ship, cuts it loose so that it will drift out of firing range and, in self-defense, kills two of the pirates who had been left to guard it. Wounded, he returns to shore only to be captured by the pirates. Newton, risking his own life, takes Bobby to O'Dea for medical aid, but first manages to obtain the map. The pirates locate the burying spot of the treasure but find that Wilkinson had dug it up and had hidden it in a cave. All the pirates are finally killed except Newton, who is captured. But Bobby helps him to escape in return for having saved his life earlier. As Newton sails out to sea alone in one of the longboats, Bobby and his friends prepare to sail with the treasure to England.

Perce Pearce produced it for Disney and Byron Haskin directed it, from a screen play by Lawrence E. Watkin.

Excellent for the family.

"There are no secrets in this business. Many drive-ins which have paid through the nose for early runs and through the bidding process have found that they were better off with film which didn't cost nearly as much, and a lot of regular houses which bid their heads off for a better run learned they were only providing the distributors with a field day.

"To be blunt about it: this business is going to be in for an even darker era if the distributors fail to be realistic. They can't demand more when they know their customers gross less."

Jay Emanuel has given the distributors a sound piece of advice. But will they heed it?

ADVERTISING CODE AMENDED TO BAN EXPLOITATION OF STARS' MISCONDUCT

Hailing its action as "a new move to strengthen the film industry's voluntary and long-established system of self-regulation," the board of directors of the Motion Picture Association of America announced on Wednesday of this week that, by unanimous vote, it had amended the Association's code of ethics for motion picture advertising to ban the use of advertising that exploits the misconduct of screen personalities.

The new section 14 added to the Advertising Code, the provisions of which apply to pressbooks, newspaper, magazine and trade paper advertising, publicity material, trailers, posters, lobby displays and all other outdoor displays, novelty distribution, radio copy and every form of motion picture exploitation, is as follows:

"No text or illustration shall be used which capitalizes, directly or by implication, upon misconduct of a person connected with a motion picture thus advertised."

To administer and carry out the provisions of this new section, the following, identified as the new section 5 of the Regulations for the Administration of the Advertising Code, was adopted also:

"After advertising for a motion picture shall have been approved by the Advertising Code Administration, if circumstances arise, either before or after the picture's release, which in the judgment of the Administrator seems to require the withdrawal of all, or any portion of such previously approved advertising, then, after consultation with the Advertising Advisory Council, he shall immediately file a written report with the President and Secretary of the Association (a) setting forth the situation existing at the time such prior approval was granted for such advertising, (b) reciting the intervening circumstances with resultant changes in the situation, (c) listing the reasons why in the opinion of the Administrator all or a designated portion of the advertising previously approved should be withdrawn and (d) certifying that if such advertising were then being presented to him for the first time, it would not be approved by him under the Advertising Code for stated reasons.

"If the President of the Association (or a Vice-President of the Association in the absence of the President), upon receipt of such report from the Advertising Code Administration, is of the opinion that the situation presented is sufficiently serious to justify consideration by the Board of Directors, the Secretary of the Association shall be instructed to call an emergency meeting of the Board, at which meeting the Board shall sit as a Board of Appeal with adequate opportunity for the producer and/or distributor of the motion picture to appear in person or through a duly authorized representative and present reasons orally or in writing, or both, as to why the prior approval of the advertising should be affirmed, and with adequate opportunity for the Administrator of the Advertising Code to appear and present reasons, either orally or in writing, or both, as to why in his judgment all or a designated portion of such previously approved advertising should be withdrawn.

"Thereafter, the Board, meeting in executive session with the producer and/or the distributor of the picture not voting, shall determine by vote of a majority of the Directors present and voting, whether all or any portion of the previously approved advertising shall be withheld from use and/or withdrawn, and such action of the Board of Directors shall be final and binding upon the producer and/or the distributor of said film.

"When any previously approved advertising for a motion picture is withdrawn pursuant to action of the Board hereunder, the company withdrawing same shall be reimbursed the unrecoverable portion of its out-of-pocket expenditures for such advertising to the extent deemed equitable and proper under all the circumstances by the Board. The amount of such reimbursement shall be prorated among all members of the Association including the company affected on the same basis as dues to the Association are currently paid.

"If neither the producer nor the distributor of said film is a member of the Association, then the non-member withdrawing same shall be reimbursed the unrecoverable portion of its out-of-pocket expenditures to the extent deemed equitable and proper under all the circumstances by the board."

In adopting the new section to the code and the accompanying regulations to administer and carry out its provisions, the Board adopted also a statement of policy reaffirming the Association's adherence to the Advertising Code and calling upon all in the industry to join in faithful observance of the Code's spirit and letter.

The MPAA's action in banning the use of advertising that exploits the misconduct of screen personalities is indeed commendable, for it recognizes the industry's moral obligation to the public through a system of self-regulation.

Equally commendable is the method adopted to withdraw approved advertising in the event of a changed situation, to be accomplished in a manner that will not work a financial hardship on the producing-distributing company which, through no fault of its own, falls victim to the scandalous shenanigans of an irresponsible player who had a part in the picture. The necessity of enforcing this rule will probably be rare, but there is always the possibility that the need for it will arise and there is no harm in being prepared to meet it.

The important thing, however, is that the Advertising Code Administration, in passing on the advertising and exploitation material submitted by the producer-distributors, demand strict observance of the Code's spirit and letter. The MPAA's statement of policy reaffirming adherence to the Code notwithstanding, the fact remains that throughout the years, ever since the Code was formulated in 1930, HARRISON'S REPORTS has repeatedly brought to the attention of its readers numerous instances in which film ad copy has been, not only false and misleading, but also very daring, stressing the sex angle to attract people to the theatre—all in violation of the Advertising Code's provisions.

If this newest amendment to the Advertising Code is to mean anything, those who administer it must take a more definite stand than they have in the past in rejecting material that either violates the Code without question or attempts to skirt it subtly. Not until the Advertising Code Administration takes such a positive stand with the producers and distributors and penalizes the offenders in accordance with the Code's provisions will the entire Code, in fact, win a greater measure of public acceptance.

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TAX FIGHT NEARING ITS CLIMAX

Reports pouring into the office of Abram F. Myers, chairman of the COMPO tax committee, indicate that the entire industry has been spurred into renewed activity against the 20% admission tax by the fact that relief from this burden is now nearer than at any time since the fight began months ago.

"A great wave of interest and renewed activity has swept the industry," says Mr. Myers, "and we need every ounce of this energy and enthusiasm if we are to come out with complete victory. Now is the time to get excited and make that final push for complete repeal!"

With the tax reduction bill voted out of committee and brought before the House of Representatives this week, its passage by that body was expected by the week-end. This bill includes a cut in the admission tax from 20% to 10%. The bill will then be rushed to the Senate Finance Committee for its consideration. "There," says Mr. Myers, "the last-ditch fight must be made for revision of the House bill so that it will include not a reduction but complete elimination of the back-breaking 20% tax. This goal is not impossible; it is near enough to justify every man and woman in the business, who wants to protect his or her job or investment, to communicate with Senators and urge others to do likewise."

Expressing amazement at the "avalanche" of response he has received from his last message to the field, Mr. Myers said that "it is positively inspiring to get back such enthusiastic letters saying that lines are being reformed, fences patched and the field organization ready to swing back into action after the several months delay while the House was considering the bill."

He reported that, on the distributor level, Andy W. Smith, Jr., chairman of the tax committee's distributor division, had dispatched telegrams to all area chairmen urging immediate action towards securing total repeal from the Senate Finance Committee before it hurries the bill to the floor of the Senate for a vote. At the exhibition level, Mr. Myers reported that many circuits have already gone into action, with all managers writing or wiring their Senators to help save their jobs. Connecticut exhibitors report the full support of the state Federation of Labor (AFL). Loew's Theatres are pinpointing their letter-writing and personal-contact efforts on the Senators from each state in which there are Loew theatres. Warners is doing likewise. Executives of circuits and producer Home Offices are making personal-letter appeals to Senators.

Richard Walsh, head of the IATSE, continuing the support of the theatre unions in the tax fight, is asking his locals for renewed efforts.

Exhibitor associations in New York and New Jersey, their hopes rising high, are asking Ned Depinet, president of COMPO, to create an immediate, special "task force" committee to map out a great nation-wide "T-Day—Go to the Movies Week" celebration to publicize the day when the tax will be lifted from the back of the box-office and provide the "medicine" the business needs. It is proposed that a group of the industry's top promotion minds be drafted to create this industry-wide promotional celebration.

"I still hope that on that happy T-Day we'll be able to shout that movie tickets now cost 20% less!" commented

Mr. Myers, "and start a great march back to the box-offices of the land."

With the tax bill about to go before the Senate Finance Committee, the climax of the industry's tax battle is at hand and not a moment must be lost in a final effort to impress the Senate with the industry's plight. Now, not tomorrow, is the time for every exhibitor and all his employees to write to their Senators pointing out that nothing less than total repeal of the admission tax will save their investments and jobs.

ANOTHER FINE JOB OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND EXPLOITATION

One of the finest examples of building public relations and good will for a major company and a producer, as well as for the entire industry, took place this week in Las Vegas, Nevada, where Paramount brought one hundred and fifty top newspaper, magazine and radio representatives to the world premiere of the Hal Wallis production "My Friend Irma Goes West."

Everyone concerned with the two-day celebration went all-out to make it a memorable event. Backed by the outstanding cooperation of civic groups and local business men, civic officials and the Chamber of Commerce extended themselves to the limit to make the visitors welcome, and not a stone was left unturned by the hard-working Paramount publicity and exploitation staff to make the celebration an event that will have beneficial effects on the "Irma" play-dates for months to come.

The local newspapers put out special editions hailing the premiere, and millions of words were filed to the nation's press and overseas papers, not only reporting the events, but also interpreting them in terms of good will for the entire motion picture industry.

This kind of fanfare, in which a motion picture company and civic bodies combine to promote a film with all the color, glamour and skill at their command, certainly pays off at the box-office for all exhibitors who play a picture that receives such handling.

THE NEW THEATRE TELEVISION ORGANIZATION

An important move to unify the exhibitors on the problems that confront the development of theatre television was taken last week in New York when prominent exhibitors from all parts of the country, representing some 3,000 theatres, attended a meeting initiated by S. H. Fabian, head of Fabian Theatres, and Leonard H. Goldenson, president of United Paramount Theatres, and completed plans for formalizing the organization of a National Exhibitors Theatre Television Committee.

Frank C. Walker, head of the Comerford Theatres and former Postmaster-General, was elected as Organizing Chairman, and Mr. Fabian, as Treasurer.

All exhibitors, large and small, who are interested in the future of theatre television, will be invited to join the organization, which will be incorporated in Washington, D. C., within the next week.

The purpose of the new organization, according to the announcement, is to conduct research on the application of television to theatre use, to encourage the development of theatre television and to consider ways and means to use

(Continued on back page)

"Where the Sidewalk Ends" with Dana Andrews and Gene Tierney

(20th Century-Fox, July; time, 95 min.)

"Where the Sidewalk Ends" is one of the most taut and absorbing crime melodramas produced in many a moon. Tense, tightly written and swiftly paced, the action grips one's attention from start to finish as it recounts the dilemma of a tough New York detective who, censured by his superiors for handling hoodlums with force, accidentally kills one in self defense and then plants false clues to divert suspicion from himself. The complications that result when he falls in love with the dead man's estranged wife give the story some intriguing twists. Dana Andrews comes through with a first rate portrayal as the detective, and considerable suspense is maintained, not only by his efforts to hide his guilt, but also by his relentless pursuit of an underworld racketeer responsible for another murder. The crisp dialogue is exceptionally good, and Otto Preminger's shrewd direction squeezes every ounce of suspense and excitement from the material at hand:—

Investigating the murder of a wealthy Texan in a floating crap game operated by Gary Merrill, leader of a gambling mob, Andrews is told that the man had been killed in a fight with Craig Stevens, who had disappeared. He learns also that Stevens and Gene Tierney had steered the victim to the game. Andrews sets out after Stevens and finds him in a cheap rooming house, intoxicated. When Stevens attacks him, Andrews knocks him down, accidentally killing him. Warned that he would be demoted unless he quit using force, Andrews becomes panicky, disposes of the body, and makes it appear as if Stevens had left town. Following through on his detective work, he contacts Gene and learns that she is Stevens' estranged wife, and that he had tricked her into helping to steer the Texan to the game. Her explanation of the fight that took place at the game convinces Andrews that Merrill and not Stevens had killed the Texan. In the complicated events that follows, Stevens' body is fished out of the river, and the police, basing their deductions on circumstantial evidence, pin the murder on Tom Tully, Gene's father, who had threatened to kill Stevens unless he stopped molesting Gene. By this time a strong love had grown up between Gene and Andrews, and he is hounded by a sense of guilt over her father's plight. Realizing that he must confess the killing himself in order to save Tully, Andrew pens a note of confession to his superior and then sets out to catch Merrill and beat a confession out of him for the first murder, knowing full well that he was inviting his own death by the attempt. He succeeds in his mission and comes out of the ordeal alive. He then frees Tully by admitting the accidental killing of Stevens. Gene, understanding his dilemma, forgives him, and the story closes with the indication that Andrews will be exonerated.

It was produced and directed by Otto Preminger from a screen play by Ben Hecht, based on a novel by William L. Stuart.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The Savage Horde" with William Elliott and Adrian Booth

(Republic, May 22; time, 90 min.)

Above average in production values but offering nothing unusual, "The Savage Horde" should, nevertheless, find a fair response in theatres that cater to the Western fans. The story, dealing mainly with the conflict between big and small ranchers, is cut from a familiar pattern and the treatment is routine, but it should satisfy the indiscriminating followers of Westerns, for it has the customary quota of gun-fights and hand-to-hand battles, with the inevitable showdown shooting match at the finish. William Elliott, as a notorious outlaw who turns to the side of law and order, makes the character likable and human. The other players are acceptable in standard characterizations. The picture, however, offers little that will appeal to picture-goers who generally shy away from this type of picture:—

Elliott, a notorious outlaw wanted for the killing of a U. S. Cavalry captain, rides into the Utah Territory to see Adrian Booth, his sweetheart, who operated a restaurant. Arriving in town, Elliott finds that Grant Withers, a wealthy ranch owner, aided by Bob Steele and Roy Barcroft, his gunmen, is making an organized grab of all the small ranches in the district through his powers over Will Wright, the local judge, a weakling. Elliott, assuming another identity, becomes partners with Noah Beery, a small rancher, and organizes the other small ranchers to defy Withers. A ranch war develops with ensuing killings and cattle stampedes, reaching its climax when Withers, discovering Elliott's true identity, captures him and turns him over to the Cavalry. With Elliott out of the way, Withers and his gunmen corner the ranchers in a small building and open fire on them to make them give in to their demands. Just as the ranchers are about to surrender, Elliott, having escaped from the Cavalry, rides into town and kills Withers and his henchmen in a blaze of gunfire. He then surrenders himself, and the authorities indicate that his plea of self-defense on the murder charge will be accepted.

It was produced and directed by Joseph Kane from a screen play by Kenneth Gamet, based on a story by Thames Williamson and Gerald Geraghty.

Suitable for the family.

"Destination Moon" with John Archer, Warren Anderson and Tom Powers

(Eagle-Lion, August; time, 90 min.)

Eagle-Lion has an exceptionally fine exploitation picture in "Destination Moon," a fascinating Technicolor production dealing with a trip to the moon in a huge interplanetary space ship. Although the theme is fanciful, it has been produced with such skill and imagination that it becomes realistic and makes one feel as if he had gone along on the trip. What helps to make the picture intriguing is a clever cartoon sequence which, in simplified terms, explains the theory of space travel by a rocketship powered by atomic energy. With this knowledge, the spectator is given a better understanding and appreciation of the problems that must be overcome to enable the ship to pull away from the Earth's gravity and hurtle into outer space where, according to scientists, there is no air, no wind and no gravity.

The first half-hour of the picture concerns itself with the initial failures of an Army general and an atomic physicist in their efforts to perfect a space ship, and their eventual success in persuading a group of industrial tycoons to finance an expedition to the moon in a rocketship powered by atomic engines. This part of the story is pretty feeble in spots, but once the ship is prepared to be launched with four men aboard the action becomes tensely exciting. The deafening roar as the gigantic silver tube rises from its base at the speed of seven miles per second; the distortion of the facial features of the four men in the control cabin as acceleration increases rapidly; the weirdness of finding themselves floating in outer space within a period of four minutes, with the Earth, a huge ball, visible through a port-hole; the terrifying experience when, halfway to the Moon, the men, dressed in electrically-heated, pressurized suits, venture onto the outside of the ship to repair a radar antenna and one man slips off and begins to float in space in an orbit of his own; his rescue from space by means of the jet propulsion supplied by an oxygen tank; the landing on the moon by pointing the ship's nose upwards and backing down against the pressure of the jet-propelled engines; the barren landscape they find on the Moon; stripping the ship of every possible ounce of extra weight so that it might take off and break out of the Moon's pull of gravity for the return trip to the Earth—all this and considerable more scientific phenomena are depicted in a manner that is highly imaginative and profoundly impressive. The colorful and weird pictorial effects of this fanciful expedition to the Moon are alone worth the price of admission.

It was produced by George Pal and directed by Irving Pichel from a screen play by Rip Van Ronkel, R. A. Heinlen and James O'Hanlon, based on a novel by Mr. Heinlen.

Very good for all types of audiences.

**"The Furies" with Barbara Stanwyck,
Wendell Corey and Walter Huston**

(Paramount, August; time, 109 min.)

This western type drama is good from the production point of view, but it is only moderately interesting as entertainment. Not only is the story not unusual, but it is long drawn out, overloaded with unnecessary scenes, and lacks a convincing dramatic punch. More attention has been paid to characterization than to plot development, with the result that the action lags most of the time. Besides, there is too much talk. The story itself is unpleasant and somber, and there is hardly any human interest, for most of the characters are unprincipled and devoid of sympathy. The picture has its moments of suspense and excitement, but on the whole it will prove dull going, particularly to the action fans:—

In the development of the episodic story, Walter Huston is shown as the despotic, scheming head of a cattle empire in the New Mexican Territory of 1899, who ruled everything with an iron hand except Barbara Stanwyck, his high-spirited daughter, whom he adored and who was slated to inherit the dynasty. Opposed to Huston is Gilbert Roland, head of a family of Mexican squatters, who claimed a right to the land and was not evicted because of Barbara's friendship for him. Opposition comes also from Wendell Corey, a self-assured young gambler, who despised Huston because he had cheated his father out of land years previously. Barbara defies her father by falling in love with Corey, only to be disillusioned when Corey accepts \$50,000 from Huston not to marry her. Her bitterness increases when her father, a widower, takes up with Judith Anderson, a worldly widow, who craftily engineers him into marriage to gain control of his vast holdings. Enraged, Barbara disfigures Judith by cutting her face with a pair of shears. She then rides away to Roland's stronghold. Huston, furious, lays siege to the stronghold, captures Roland and, as revenge on Barbara, hangs him. The hanging turns Barbara's feeling for her father to bitter hate, and she joins Corey in a bold scheme to strike back at Huston by taking his cattle empire away from him. They accomplish this by secretly buying up at a few cents on the dollar thousands of dollars in worthless currency that had been issued privately by Huston, using it to pay for a great herd of cattle they had purchased from him anonymously. The manipulation forces Huston to turn over his complete holdings to them and, as he admires his daughter for her shrewdness, he is shot dead from ambush by Roland's mother.

It was produced by Hal B. Wallis and directed by Anthony Mann from a screen play by Charles Schnee, based on a novel by Niven Busch. The cast includes Thomas Gomez, Albert Dekker, Beulah Bondi, Wallace Ford and others.

Adult fare.

**"If This Be Sin" with Myrna Loy,
Peggy Cummins, Richard Greene
and Roger Livesey**

(United Artists, Sept. 8; time, 72 min.)

A moderately interesting double triangle adult drama. Produced and released in England under the title, "That Dangerous Age," the picture has been cut drastically from its original running time of 98 minutes, but it is apparent that this cutting has not helped matters, for it remains a slow-moving, uneven conversational piece of conflicting emotions, revolving around the secret but innocent love affair between a distinguished lawyer's neglected wife and his junior partner, who finds new romance with her stepdaughter. The fact that the lawyer discovers that his wife had been secretly meeting his future son-in-law adds to the emotional mixup, but the stagey presentation, spotty direction, and the loosely written characterizations rob the story of a convincing dramatic punch. Myrna Loy tries to put feeling into her part, but she seems miscast. Robert Livesey, as her husband, overacts the part:—

Livesey, a prominent attorney, is so wrapped up in his work that he takes for granted Myrna Loy, his attractive second wife. Overwork causes him to suffer an attack of temporary blindness, and he is ordered to Capri for a rest.

He is accompanied by Myrna and by Peggy Cummins, his daughter by the first marriage, whom Myrna adored. While recuperating Livesey tries to recapture the love he had lost through his neglect of Myrna, and she devotes herself to him. But he is unable to keep his mind off work, and sends for Richard Greene, his junior partner. One day, while reading aloud to Livesey mail he had received from England, Myrna begins reading an anonymous letter but breaks off when she discovers that it discloses a secret love affair she had been having with Greene. Livesey compels her to finish reading the letter, despite her protests. Although guilty, she dismisses the accusation as pure nonsense, pointing out that Greene was in love with Peggy, which was not true. When Greene arrives, Myrna informs him of the incident and prevails on him to court Peggy in order to make her story convincing. Unexpectedly, a true love grows up between Peggy and Greene and they become engaged. Myrna, though heartbroken, accepts the situation. Months later, at a party celebrating his return to London, Livesey learns from his mischievous sister, who disliked Myrna, that she had written the anonymous letter and that the accusation was true. Angered, Livesey humiliates Myrna in front of their guests. Peggy, now aware of the affair, breaks with Greene. In the end, however, after much emotional stress, there is a general reconciliation, with Greene and Peggy departing on a honeymoon with the blessings of Myrna and Livesey.

It was produced and directed by Gregory Ratoff from a screen play by Gene Markey, based on a play by Margaret Kennedy and Ilya Surgutchoff. Adult fare.

**"Once a Thief" with Cesar Romero
June Havoc and Marie McDonald**

(United Artists, July 7; time, 88 min.)

Handicapped by an inadequate script that is as pat and stereotyped as can be imagined, "Once a Thief" has little to recommend it. The story, which deals with the downfall of a pretty waitress when she falls prey to a cheap bookie who used his charms to fleece working girls, is not only trite and cliché-ridden but completely unconvincing. The direction is poor and the acting is no credit to the players. The picture is best summed up as a tawdry, artificial concoction that lacks flavor, consistency, reason and dramatic suspense. Moreover, it is demoralizing in that it depicts in specific detail the different techniques of shoplifting:—

Down on her luck in San Francisco, June Havoc, a working girl, falls in with Iris Adrian, a brassy shoplifter, who teaches her the tricks of the trade. Almost caught when she steals a watch, June escapes to Los Angeles, when she finds a job as a waitress and becomes friendly with Marie McDonald, another waitress. Romance enters June's life when she meets Cesar Romero, owner of a dry cleaning shop, which was actually a front for his small-time bookie operations. A glib talker, Romero soon leads June to believe that he is in love with her and will marry her as soon as his cleaning business begins to operate at a profit. June, to help him, gives him her life's savings plus some money borrowed from Marie. But he continues to stall about the wedding and keeps harping that he needs money. To satisfy his demands, she teams up again with Iris, but their shoplifting effort fails when Iris is caught. June manages to escape. Meanwhile Romero, a sneak thief, steals the watch June had snatched in San Francisco, and learns that it is "hot" stuff when he attempts to pawn it. He tips off the police about June's whereabouts to get out of his promise to marry her. Arrested and sentenced to a year in prison, June believes that Iris had "ratted" on her. Romero now switches his attentions to Marie, and she, too, falls for his charms. June learning of the affair, deduces that Marie, who knew of her past, had informed the police so that she might have a clear field with Romero. Enraged, she breaks out of jail for the purpose of killing Marie, but she learns the truth when she meets Lon Chancy, Romero's stooge. She finds Romero, shoots him dead, and gives up to the police.

It was produced and directed by W. Lee Wilder from a screen play by Richard S. Conway, based on a story by Hans Wilhelm and Max Colpet.

Strictly adult fare.

this medium in the theatres as a public service by making available theatres during non-operating hours for educational and social welfare programs and for utilization by government agencies for instructional and training purposes.

In accepting the post of Organizing Chairman, Mr. Walker said:

"It is very heartening to me to have exhibitors representing all types of theatres recognize the potentialities of this great new medium of communication and to agree upon a plan for conducting research and making engineering and other studies to develop theatre television so as to make it available to every exhibitor throughout the country. I also am highly pleased that the sponsors of this new organization are interested not only in the commercial possibilities of the use of television in the nation's theatres, but also in its utilization as a public service to the national government and to the communities which we serve.

"Our national defense officials are fully cognizant of the excellent use that could be made in an emergency of the more than 12,000,000 seats in the nation's theatres which, when theatre television becomes a reality, could be thrown open at short notice to deliver a visual message, in 3 or 4 sittings, to the entire adult population of the country, the vast majority of which is within one hour's distance of the nearest theatre. In time of war, this vast audience also could be assembled for vital messages from state and local officials, and the theatres made available for preliminary training of recruits, disaster workers and countless others engaged in essential emergency services. I also can envision our theatres being used for morning television programs on adult education, teaching citizenship, home-making and helping the farmer and small business man with their problems."

Mr. Walker stated that letters explaining the objectives of the NETTC, with an invitation to join, will be sent to every theatre in the country.

With large-screen theatre television looked upon by many in the industry as the means by which this new medium will be converted into the greatest stimulant the motion picture business has had since the advent of sound, the formation of an organization such as the NETTC is a step in the right direction, for it offers the exhibitors, regardless of which associations they are affiliated with, an opportunity to unify their efforts in the development of this art, as well as in the securing of channels for the exclusive use of theatres, and in bringing about the manufacture of equipment that will be standardized and sold at a price that will be within the reach of the average theatre.

The problems confronting the development of theatre television are many, and to overcome these problems there is urgent need for exhibitor teamwork. In the matter of securing channels for theatre television, for example, there is now a division of opinion among the organized theatre groups, with some favoring channels in the VHF range while others want it in the micro-wave range. This division of opinion may be damaging to the industry as a whole when the different groups appear at the forthcoming Federal Communication Commission hearings for the allocation of channels for theatre use. Through the NETTC, however, it may be possible to secure channels in both ranges without the exponents of one method hurting the exponents of the other method.

If theatre television is to provide the industry with the "shot-in-the-arm" it needs, we must not allow internal disputes to impede its development. The NETTC seems to offer the exhibitors, large and small alike, an opportunity to join hands for their mutual protection and benefit.

"Humphrey Takes a Chance" with Joe Kirkwood, Leon Errol and Tom Neal

(Monogram, June 4; time, 62 min.)

This latest "Joe Palooka" picture has a story that is only fair, but what will put it over is the pie-throwing scenes, which occur toward the end. These scenes remind one of the happy old days of the Mack Sennett, as well as of the Chaplin, comedies. Even though picture-making has made great advances since those days pie-throwing still causes

much laughter. The action manages to hold one's interest fairly tense up to the pie-throwing scenes. Jean Yarbrough's direction is good, as is usually the case:—

Holding a monopoly on arenas and on top-ranking contenders for the boxing championship, Tom Neal, a promoter, does not allow any worth-while fighter to box Joe Kirkwood unless Leon Errol, Kirkwood's manager, agrees to give him a thirty per cent cut. Errol, however, refuses to be blackmailed. Learning that Errol and Kirkwood were headed for a small town to spend the weekend with Robert Coogan, a strong man, and thinking that Errol was going there to arrange a bout with Coogan, Neal rushes to that town ahead of them and, with the aid of the town's crooked Mayor, signs up Coogan. When Kirkwood and Errol arrive, they are jailed on the ground that they had violated traffic laws. Learning of the Mayor's crookedness, Errol, now released, tells Coogan that the only way by which he could get out of the contract would be to work for the Mayor's recall. Coogan agrees to run for Mayor. As the recall and election campaign are launched, Neal's gang moves into town and, during a picnic given for Coogan, Neal hires a little girl, actually an actress, to rush to Coogan and call him "daddy." Coogan's supporters begin to desert him, but Errol hires the little girl for an appearance at the next picnic, where she announces that Coogan is not her father. Neal's gang tries to break up the picnic by throwing pies at the Coogan supporters, and a free-for-all fight results. The Coogan element wins, and an honest government is assured for the little town.

Hal E. Chester produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it, from a screen play by Jeff Anjan, who based it on the comic strip by Ham Fisher. Eddie Gribbon, Chester Conklin, Hank Mann and Andrew Tombes are among those in the supporting cast.

Good for the family. Children in particular should enjoy the pie-throwing.

"The Lost Volcano" with Johnny Sheffield, Donald Woods and Marjorie Lord

(Monogram, June 25; time, 76 min.)

Better than any of the previous "Bomba" series pictures, by reason of the fact that there is considerable human interest, aroused by Tommy Ivo, a youngster about twelve, and by the fact that the blending of stock shots with real shots is imperceptible. The spectator is held in tense suspense in the scenes where the lives of the sympathetic characters are placed in danger. The eruption of the volcano, causing the earth to tremble, adds to the thrills. The photography is good:—

Donald Woods, a zoologist goes to Africa to capture wild animals. He is accompanied by Marjorie Lord, his wife, and by Tommy Ivo, their son. In Africa, Woods meets Grandon Rhodes, an ethnologist, who tells him of a legend concerning a lost volcano, near which is a half-buried ancient city and a wealth in jewels. Woods shows only mild interest in the legend, disbelieving much of it. His son meets Bomba (Johnny Sheffield), a jungle boy, and from him learns that there is truth in the legend, but when he attempts to convey his knowledge to his father his statement is attributed to vivid imagination. But Elena Verdugo, the family servant, verifies Tommy's story, for she had seen Bomba. Woods suggests to his son that he persuade Bomba to visit them, but Bomba refuses out of fear that he, too, would be captured and caged like the wild animals he loved. Learning that Tommy knew where the treasure is buried, two jungle guides kidnap him with the hope that he will lead them to the jewels. Bomba, attempting to rescue Tommy, is wounded. Woods and Rhodes go after the kidnapers and, in a fight, the guides kill Rhodes. Tommy eventually leads them to the treasure but they are trapped by the volcano's eruption. Bomba, heading a rescue party, finds Tommy and leads him to safety. The kidnapers, however, become victims of their greed; in remaining behind to take away some of the treasure, they are engulfed by the flowing lava.

It was produced by Walter Mirisch and directed by Ford Beebe, who wrote the screen play, based upon the characters created by Roy Rockwood in the "Bomba" books.

Good for the family.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXXII

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Arizona Cowboy, The—Republic (67 min.)	not reviewed
Armored Car Robbery—RKO (68 min.)	91
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Belle of Old Mexico—Republic (70 min.)	15
Beware of Blondie—Columbia (66 min.)	56
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Champagne for Caesar—United Artists (99 min.)	23
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Code of the Silver Sage—Republic (60 min.)	not reviewed
Colt .45—Warner Bros. (74 min.)	71
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Congolaise—Film Classics (68 min.)	74
Conspirator—MGM (87 min.)	23
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Cowtown—Columbia (70 min.)	not reviewed
Crisis—MGM (96 min.)	99
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Destination Big House—Republic (60 min.)	90
Destination Murder—RKO (72 min.)	92
Devil's Doorway—MGM (84 min.)	78
Duchess of Idaho—MGM (98 min.)	95
Dynamite Pass—RKO (61 min.)	not reviewed
Eagle & the Hawk, The—Paramount (104 min.)	23
Everybody's Dancin'—Lippert (65 min.)	60
Father is a Bachelor—Columbia (84 min.)	22
Father Makes Good—Monogram (61 min.)	83
Father of the Bride—MGM (92 min.)	75
Faust and the Devil—Columbia (87 min.)	72
Federal Agent at Large—Republic (60 min.)	47
Fence Riders—Monogram (57 min.)	not reviewed
50 Years Before Your Eyes—Warner Bros. (70 min.)	99
Fighting Stallion, The—Eagle-Lion (63 min.)	70
Flame and the Arrow, The—Warner Bros. (88 min.)	98
Flying Saucer, The—Film Classics (69 min.)	11
Forbidden Jungle—Eagle-Lion (67 min.)	71
Fortunes of Captain Blood—Columbia (91 min.)	80
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Gunfighter, The—20th Century-Fox (84 min.)	66
Gun Man of Abilene—Republic (60 min.)	not reviewed
Gun Slingers—Monogram (55 min.)	not reviewed
Happy Years, The—MGM (110 min.)	82
Harbor of Missing Men—Republic (60 min.)	62
Her Wonderful Lie—Columbia (86 min.)	87
Hills of Oklahoma—Republic (67 min.)	not reviewed
Hoedown—Columbia (64 min.)	20
Hollywood Varieties—Lippert (60 min.)	4
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In a Lonely Place—Columbia (94 min.)	79
Iroquois Trail, The—United Artists (85 min.)	92
It's a Small World—Eagle-Lion (68 min.)	88
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Jackie Robinson Story, The—Eagle-Lion (76 min.)	79
Jiggs & Maggie Out West—Monogram (66 min.)	49
Joe Palooka Meets Humphrey—Monogram (65 min.)	20
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Key to the City—MGM (99 min.)	15
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Killer Shark—Monogram (76 min.)	52
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Kind Hearts & Coronets—Eagle-Lion (101 min.)	74
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Messenger of Peace—Astor Pictures (87 min.)	56
Military Academy—Columbia (65 min.)	67
Modern Marriage, A—Monogram (66 min.)	59
Montana—Warner Bros. (76 min.)	2
Mother Didn't Tell Me—20th Century-Fox (88 min.)	18
Motor Patrol—Lippert (67 min.)	76
Mule Train—Columbia (70 min.)	not reviewed
My Friend Irma Goes West—Paramount (91 min.)	86
Mystery at the Burlesque—Monogram (59 min.)	64
Mystery Street—MGM (93 min.)	78
Nancy Goes to Rio—MGM (99 min.)	18
Nevadan, The—Columbia (81 min.)	7
Never Fear—Eagle-Lion (81 min.)	7
Next Voice You Hear, The—MGM (82 min.)	90
Night and the City—20th Century-Fox (95 min.)	83
No Man of Her Own—Paramount (98 min.)	31
No Sad Songs for Me—Columbia (89 min.)	58
One Way Street—Univ.-Int'l (79 min.)	59
Operation Haylift—Lippert (73 min.)	63
Over the Border—Monogram (58 min.)	not reviewed
Our Very Own—RKO (93 min.)	46
Outcast of Black Mesa—Columbia (54 min.)	not reviewed
Outriders, The—MGM (93 min.)	38
Outside the Wall—Univ.-Int'l (80 min.)	19
Palomino, The—Columbia (75 min.)	20
Panic in the Streets—20th Century-Fox (91 min.)	94
Peggy—Univ.-Int'l (77 min.)	95
Perfect Strangers—Warner Bros. (88 min.)	35
Perfect Woman, The—Eagle-Lion (87 min.)	70
Please Believe Me—MGM (86 min.)	39
Quicksand—United Artists (79 min.)	34
Rapture—Film Classics (80 min.)	56
Reformer and the Redhead, The—MGM (90 min.)	39

Return of the Frontiersman—Warner Bros. (74 min.) . 78
Riding High—Paramount (112 min.) 6
Rocketship XM—Lippert (78 min.) 72
Rocking Horse Winner, The—Univ.-Int'l (91 min.).. 90
Rock Island Trail—Republic (90 min.) 72
Rogues of Sherwood Forest—Columbia (80 min.).... 96
Run for Your Money, A—Univ.-Int'l (83 min.).... 56

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Sarumba—Eagle-Lion (64 min.) 47

Secret Fury, The—RKO (86 min.) 67

Shadow on the Wall—MGM (84 min.) 38

Sideshow—Monogram (67 min.) 96

Sierra—Univ.-Int'l (83 min.) 67

Singing Guns—Republic (91 min.) 42

Six Gun Mesa—Monogram (57 min.) not reviewed

Skipper Surprised His Wife—MGM (85 min.)..... 75

So Young, So Bad—United Artists (88 min.)..... 86

South Sea Sinner—Univ.-Int'l (88 min.) 3

Spy Hunt—Univ.-Int'l (75 min.) 91

Square Dance Katy—Monogram (76 min.) 80

Stage Fright—Warner Bros. (110 min.)..... 30

Stars in My Crown—MGM (89 min.) 35

State Penitentiary—Columbia (66 min.) 80

Storm Over Wyoming—RKO (60 min.) not reviewed

Stromboli—RKO (81 min.) 26

Sundowners, The—Eagle-Lion (83 min.) 6

Sunset Boulevard—Paramount (110 min.) 63

Tarnished—Republic (60 min.)..... 42

Tarzan and the Slave Girl—RKO (74 min.)..... 43

Tattooed Stranger, The—RKO (64 min.) 19

Texas Dynamo—Columbia (54 min.) not reviewed

Third Man, The—Selznick Rel. Org. (104 min.) 19

This Side of the Law—Warner Bros. (74 min.)..... 87

Three Came Home—20th Century-Fox (106 min.).... 22

Ticket to Tomahawk, A—20th Century-Fox (90 min.).. 62

Torch, The—Eagle-Lion (83 min.) 76

Trial of the Rustlers—

Columbia (55 min.) not reviewed

Treasure Island—RKO (96 min.) 99

Trigger, Jr.—Republic (68 min.)..... not reviewed

Twilight in the Sierras—Republic (67 m.).... not reviewed

Tyrant of the Sea—Columbia (70 min.) 47

Under My Skin—20th Century-Fox (86 min.)..... 43

Underworld Story, The—United Artists (89 min.)

(reviewed as "The Whipped") 50

Unmasked—Republic (60 min.) 22

Wabash Avenue—20th Century-Fox (92 min.)..... 51

Wagonmaster—RKO (86 min.) 55

Western Pacific Agent—Lippert (65 min.)..... 48

West of Wyoming—Monogram (57 min.)... not reviewed

When Willie Comes Marching Home—

20th Century-Fox (82 min.) 3

Where Danger Lives—RKO (84 min.) 98

Whipped, The—United Artists (89 min.)..... 50

White Tower, The—RKO (98 min.)..... 95

Winchester '73—Univ.-Int'l (92 min.)..... 91

Winslow Boy, The—Eagle-Lion (97 min.)..... 42

Woman of Distinction, A—Columbia (85 min.)..... 35

Woman on Pier 13—RKO (72 min.) (reviewed as

"I Married a Communist") 1949 154

Women from Headquarters—Republic (60 min.) 74

Vanishing Westerner—Republic (60 min.) not reviewed

Vicious Years, The—Film Classics (79 min.)..... 30

Yellow Cab Man, The—MGM (85 min.)..... 27

Young Daniel Boone—Monogram (71 min.)..... 36

Young Man With a Horn—Warner Bros. (112 min.)... 24

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Allied Artists Features

(1560 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

(Distribution through Monogram)

16 There's a Girl in My Heart—Knox-Bowman/Jean.. Jan.

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

241 Frightened City—Keyes-Korvin-Bishop May

235 Kill the Umpire—Bendix-Merkel May

245 Cowtown—Gene Autry (70 m.) May

238 No Sad Songs for Me—Sullivan-Corey May

203 Beauty on Parade—Hutton-Warrick May 4

204 Customs Agent—Eythe-Reynolds May 18

237 The Good Humor Man—Carson-Albright..... June

233 Fortunes of Captain Blood—Hayward..... June

251 Hoedown—Eddy Arnold June

266 Texas Dynamo—Charles Starrett (54 m.).... June 1

202 State Penitentiary—Baxter-Stevens June 8

243 Rogues of Sherwood Forest—Derek-Lynn..... July

711 Ocean Drive—O'Brien-Dru July

247 Beyond the Purple Hills—Gene Autry (70 m.).. July

240 Captive Girl—Johnny Weissmuller July

220 David Harding, Counterspy—St. John-Long.. July 13

Eagle-Lion Features

(165 West 46th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

031 Kind Hearts & Coronets—British cast..... Apr.

029 Kill or be Killed—Tierney-Colouris Apr.

015 The Perfect Woman—British cast Apr.

032 The Jackie Robinson Story—Robinson May

027 The Winslow Boy—Donat-Hardwicke May

107 The Fallen Idol—Richardson-Morgan May

012 The Glass Mountain—Cortesa-Denison May

056 Twin Beds—reissue May

057 Getting Gertie's Garter—reissue May

025 The Torch—Goddard-Armendariz June

Eye Witness—Montgomery-Banks June

High Lonesome—Barrymore-Wills June

Timber Fury—Bruce-Lee June

030 It's a Small World—Dale-Miller June

The Blue Lamp—British cast June

The Sun Sets at Dawn—Reed-Parr July

Golden Salamander—British cast July

Naughty Arlette—British cast July

055 Up in Mabel's Room—reissue July

054 Tillie's Punctured Romance—reissue July

058 Abroad with Two Yanks—reissue July

026 Destination Moon—Archer-Anderson Aug.

Film Classics Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

Good Time Girl—British cast May 11

Sudan—reissue June 1

Arabian Nights—reissue June 1

One Night in the Tropics—reissue June 15

Naughty Nineties—reissue June 15

Captain Kidd—reissue June 30

The Bridge of San Luis Rey—reissue June 30

The Wind is My Lover—Linfors-Kent not set

Lippert-Screen Guild Features

(255 Hyde St., San Francisco 2, Calif.)

4930 West of the Brazos—Ellison-Hayden Apr. 28

4910 Operation Haylift—Williams-Rutherford May 5

4925 Colorado Ranger—Ellison-Hayden May 12

4904 Rocketship XM—Bridges-O'Brian June 2

4926 Crooked River—Ellison-Hayden June 9

4923 Motor Patrol—Castle-O'Brian June 16

4929 Fast on the Draw—Ellison-Hayden June 30

4920 Hijacked—Davis-Jones July 14

4931 I Shot Billy the Kid—Barry-Neal Aug. 4

4911 Holiday Rhythm—All-star cast Aug. 18

4933 Border Rangers—Barry-Neal Sept. 1

4907 Return of Jesse James—Ireland-Dvorak Sept. 8

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

25 The Reformer & the Redhead—Powell-Allyson... May

26 Please Believe Me—Kerr-Walker-Lawford May

27 Shadow on the Wall—Sothorn-Scott May

28 The Big Hangover—Johnson-Taylor May

30 Father of the Bride—Tracy-Bennett-Taylor June

31 Skipper Surprised His Wife—Walker-Leslie June

29 The Asphalt Jungle—Hayden-Hagen June

32 The Happy Years—Stockwell-Hickman July

33 Duchess of Idaho—Williams-Johnson July

41 Crisis—Grant-Ferrer July

35 Mystery Street—Montalban-Forrest July

36 Three Little Words—Astaire-Skelton-Ellen Aug.

38 The Miniver Story—Garson-Pidgeon Aug.

37 Lady Without Passport—Lamar-Hodiak Aug.

34 Devil's Doorway—Robert Taylor not set

39 Annie Get Your Gun—Hutton-Keel not set

40 Stars in My Crown—McCrea-Drew not set

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

4917 Father Makes Good—Walburn May 7

4914 Lucky Losers—Bowery Boys May 14

4912 Humphrey Takes a Chance—Kirkwood June 4

4924 Side Show—McGuire-Roberts June 18

4905 Bomba and the Lost Volcano—Sheffield June 25

4942 Arizona Territory—Whip Wilson July 2

4923 The Silk Noose—Carole Landis (formerly

"The Silk Stocking Murder") July 9

4919 Snow Dog—Kirby Grant July 16

4903 County Fair—Calhoun-Nigh July 30

4953 Massacre Valley—J. M. BrownAug. 6
4915 Triple Trouble—Bowery BoysAug. 13
4943 Silver Raiders—Whip WilsonAug. 20
4908 Tall Timber—McDowall-DonnellSept. 3
4906 Bomba and the Hidden City—Sheffield.....Sept. 24

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

4919 No Man of Her Own—Stanwyck-LundMay
4916 Eagle & the Hawk—Payne-Fleming-O'Keefe ...June
4922 My Friend Irma Goes West—Wilson-LynnJuly
4923 The Lawless—Carey-RussellJuly
4926 The Furies—Stanwyck-HustonAug.
4927 Sunset Boulevard—Swanson-HoldenAug.

RKO Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

017 Woman on Pier 13—Day-Ryan
(formerly "I Married a Communist").....
069 Man on the Eiffel Tower—Tone-Laughton
070 Stromboli—Ingrid Bergman
019 Storm Over Wyoming—Tim Holt (60 m.).....
018 The Tattooed Stranger—Miles-White
020 Tarzan and the Slave Girl—Barker-Darcel
073 The Capture—Wright-Ayres
074 Wagonmaster—Johnson-Drew
022 Dynamite Pass—Tim Holt (61 m.)
021 The Golden Twenties—Documentary
075 The Secret Fury—Colbert-Ryan
023 The White Tower—Ford-Valli
Where Danger Lives—Mitchum-Domergue
Born to be Bad—Fontaine-Ryan
Treasure Island—Driscoll-Newton
Our Very Own—Blyth-Granger-Evans
Edge of Doom—Andrews-Granger-Evans

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

4961 The Arizona Cowboy—Rex Allen (67 m.) ..Apr. 1
4916 Woman from Headquarters—
Huston-RockwellMay 1
4952 Hills of Oklahoma—Rex Allen (67 m.)...May 1
4964 Salt Lake Raiders—Lane (60 m.)May 1
4914 Rock Island Trail—Tucker-MaraMay 18
4917 The Savage Horde—Elliott-BoothMay 22
4918 Destination Big House—Patrick-Rockwell ..June 1
4920 The Avengers—Carroll-MaraJune 26
4945 Trigger, Jr.—Roy Rogers (68 m.).....June 30
4965 Covered Wagon Raid—Lane (60 m.).....June 30
4921 Trial Without Jury—Rockwell-TaylorJuly 8
The Old Frontier—Monty HaleJuly 15
Jungle Stampede—DocumentaryJuly 29
Surrender—Ralston-CarrollJuly 31
Redwood Forest Trail—Rex AllenAug. 1

Selznick Rel. Org. Features

(400 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.)

The Fallen Idol—British castNov.
The Third Man—Welles-Valli-CottenFeb.

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

012 The Big Lift—Clift-DouglasMay
011 A Ticket to Tomahawk—Baxter-DaileyMay
013 Night and the City—Tierney-WidmarkJune
016 Love That Brute—Douglas-PetersJune
015 The Gunfighter—Gregory PeckJuly
017 Where the Sidewalk Ends—Andrews-Tierney ...July
018 Stella—Sheridan-Mature-WayneAug.
020 The Caribou Trail—Randolph ScottAug.
014 Broken Arrow—Stewart-PagetAug.
019 The Black Rose—Power-Aubrey-WellesSept.
021 My Blue Heaven—Grable-DaileySept.
022 Panic in the Streets—Widmark-DouglasSept.

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

Johnny One-Eye—O'Brien-Morris-MoranMay 5
So Young, So Bad—Henreid-McLeodMay 19
The Whipped—Duryea-Storm-O'SheaJune 2
Iroquois Trail—Montgomery-MarshallJune 16
Once a Thief—Romero-Havoc-McDonaldJuly 7
The Underworld Story—Duryea-Storm (reviewed
as "The Whipped")July 21
The Admiral Was a Lady—Hendrix-O'BrienAug. 4
The Men—Brando-WrightAug. 25
If This Be Sin—Loy-Cummins-GreeneSept. 8
Ellen—Young-Drake-Suttonnot set

Universal-International Features

(445 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

916 Comanche Territory—O'Hara-CareyMay
917 I Was a Shoplifter—Brady-Freeman-KingMay
918 Curtain Call at Cactus Creek—O'Connor-Arden..June
919 Sierra—Murphy-HendrixJune
920 Spy Ring—Toren-DuffJune
921 Winchester '73—Stewart-Winters-DuryeaJuly
922 Peggy—Lynn-Coburn-GreenwoodJuly
Adam and Evelyn—British castJuly
923 Shakedown—Duff-Downot set
905 Tight Little Island—British castnot set

Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

921 The Damned Don't Cry—Crawford-Brian ...May 13
922 Colt .45—Scott-Roman-ScottMay 27
923 Destination Tokyo—reissueJune 3
924 God Is My Co-Pilot—reissueJune 3
925 Caged—Parker-MooreheadJune 10
926 This Side of the Law—Lindfors-SmithJune 17
927 Return of the Frontiersman—McRae-London..June 24
928 Bright Leaf—Cooper-Bacall-CarsonJuly 1
929 The Great Jewel Robbery—David Brian.....July 15
930 The Flame and the Arrow—Lancaster-Mayo ..July 22
50 Years Before Your Eyes—Documentary....July 29

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

2857 Meet the Winners—
Screen Snapshots (10 m.)Apr. 6
2554 Candid Microphone No. 4 (10½ m.).....Apr. 20
2807 College Sports Paradise—SportsApr. 20
2857 Meet the Winners—Screen Snapshots
(10 m.)Apr. 26
2653 Village Barn—Cavalcade of B'wayApr. 27
2609 The Wise Owl—Favorite (reissue) (7 m.)...May 4
2808 Clown Prince of Golf—Sports (8½ m.)...May 25
2858 Famous Cartoonists—Screen Snap. (9½ m.)..May 25
2504 The Miner's Daughter—Jolly FrolicsMay 25
2610 The Little Moth's Big Flame—
Favorite (reissue) (8½ m.)June 1
2555 Candid Microphone No. 5June 15
2859 Hollywood Ice Capades—Screen Snap.June 22
2809 Hi Board Hi Jinks—SportsJune 29
2611 The Timid Pup—Favorite (reissue)July 6
2810 King of the Jockeys—SportsJuly 20
2860 Hollywood's Famous Feet—Screen Snap. ...July 20
2654 Leon & Eddie's—Cavalcade of B'wayJuly 27
2505 Giddyap—Jolly FrolicsJuly 27

Columbia—Two Reels

2407 Love at First Bite—StoogesMay 4
2408 Self-Made Maid—StoogesMay 4
2425 Nursey Behave—Vera VagueMay 11
2435 His Ex Marks the Spot—
Favorite (reissue) (17½ m.)May 25
2426 One Shivery Night—Hugh HerbertJuly 13
2416 House About It—Quillan-VernonJuly 20
2180 Atom Man vs. Superman—Serial (15 ep.)...July 20
2436 Oh My Nerves!—Favorite (reissue)July 27

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

T-118 Roaming Thru Michigan—Travel. (9 m.) ..May 20
W-143 Ventriloquist Cat—Cartoon (7 m.)May 27
W-144 The Cuckoo Clock—Cartoon (7 m.)June 10
S-159 That's His Story—Pete Smith (9 m.).....June 17
W-164 Yankee Doodle Mouse—
Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)June 24
W-145 Safety Second—Cartoon (7 m.)July 1
Z-172 Moments in Music—Industry Short (10 m.)..July 13

Paramount—One Reel

R9-7 Down Stream Highway—Spotlight (7 m.)..June 2
P9-7 Ups an' Downs Derby—Noveltoon (7 m.)...June 9
E9-6 Jitterbug Jive—PopeyeJune 23
X9-9 Heap, Hep Injuns—Screen SongJune 30
R9-8 To the Winner—Spotlight (10 m.)July 7
P9-8 Pleased to Eat You—Noveltoon (7 m.)July 21
X9-10 Gobs of Fun—Screen Song (7 m.).....July 28
R9-9 The Sporting Suwannee—Spotlight (10 m.)..Aug. 4
E9-7 Popeye Makes a Movie—PopeyeAug. 11
P9-9 Goofy, Goofy, Gander—NoveltoonAug. 18
X9-11 Helter-Swelter—Screen SongAug. 25
R9-10 Operation Jack Frost—SpotlightSept. 1
P9-10 Saved by the Bell—NoveltoonSept. 15
X9-12 Boos in the Night—Screen SongSept. 22
E9-8 Baby Wants Spinach—PopeyeSept. 29

RKO—One Reel

04111	Crazy Over Daisy—Disney (6 m.)	Mar. 24
04208	Wonders Down Under—Screenliner (8 m.)	Mar. 24
04112	The Wonder Dog—Disney (7 m.)	Apr. 7
04308	Horseshow—Sportscope (8 m.)	Apr. 7
04704	Funny Little Bunnies—Disney (reissue) (7 m.)	Apr. 21
04209	Sunshine U—Screenliner (8 m.)	Apr. 21
04113	Trailer Horn—Disney (6 m.)	Apr. 28
04309	The Bauer Girls—Sportscope	May 5
04114	Primitive Pluto—Disney (7 m.)	May 19
04210	Country Rhythm—Screenliner	May 19
04115	Puss-Cafe—Disney (7 m.)	June 9
04116	Motor Mania—Disney (7 m.)	June 30
04705	The Grasshopper & the Ant—Disney (reissue) (7 m.)	July 7
04117	Pests of the West—Disney (7 m.)	July 21
04118	Food for Feudin—Disney (7 m.)	Aug. 11
04706	Brave Little Tailor—Disney (reissue) (9 m.)	Aug. 25

RKO—Two Reels

03108	Trading Post—This Is America (15 m.)	Apr. 28
03405	Brooklyn Buckaroos—Comedy Special	May 12
03109	Play Ball—This is America (13 m.)	May 26

Republic—Two Reels

4982	Radar Patrol vs Spy King (12 ep.)	Apr. 15
4983	Undersea Kingdom—Serial (12 ep.) (reissue)	July 8

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

5024	Just a Little Bull—Terry (reissue) (7 m.)	June
8001	Mid-West Metropolis—Specialty (9 m.)	June
5009	Law & Order (Mighty Mouse)—Terry. (7 m.)	June
3006	Action with Rod & Reel—Sport	June
5010	The Red Headed Monkey—Terrytoon (7 m.)	July
8002	New York Philharmonic Orch.—Specialty (10 m.)	July
5011	Dingbat in All This & Rabbit Stew—Terry. (7 m.)	July
8003	Music of Manhattan—Specialty (10 m.)	July
5012	The Dog Show—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Aug.
7003	Sketch Henderson & Orch.—Melody	Aug.
5013	King Tut's Tomb (Talk. Magpies)—Terry. (7 m.)	Aug.

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

Vol. 16 No. 3—Where's the Fire?—March of Time	April
Vol. 16 No. 4—Beauty at Work—March of Time (17 m.)	May

United Artists—One Reel

Glory Filled Spirituals—Songs of America (10m.)	May 12
Highlights of Long Ago—Songs of America (9 m.)	June 9
Long Remembrances—Songs of America (9 m.)	July 14
Folk Lore—Songs of America (9 m.)	Aug. 11
The Moods—Songs of America (9 m.)	Sept. 15

Universal—One Reel

5328	The Beach Nut—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	May 8
5385	Harmony Hall—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)	May 8
5345	A Camping We Will Goo—Variety Views (9 m.)	May 15
5329	Boogie Woogie Man—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	June 12
5330	Fish Fry—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	July 17
5386	Melody Moods—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)	July 17
5331	Toyland Premiere—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	Aug. 14
5332	Greatest Man in Siam—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	Sept. 11
5333	Ski for Two—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)	Oct. 16
(Ed. Note: "The 'Sing & Be Happy' series has been changed to 'Cartoon Melodies.'")		

Universal—Two Reels

5307	King Cole Trio—Musical (15 m.)	May 17
5308	Claude Thornhill & Orch.—Musical (15 m.)	June 14
5356	Cactus Caravan—Musical Western (26 m.)	July 6
5309	Sarah Vaughan & Herb Jeffries—Musical (15 m.)	July 12
5357	Western Courage—Musical Western	Aug. 31
5358	Ready to Ride—Musical Western	Oct. 5

Vitaphone—One Reel

6310	Tic, Toc, Tuckered—B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)	June 3
6508	Riviera Days—Sports Parade (10 m.)	June 3

6601	Horse & Buggy Days—Novelty (10 m.)	June 17
6722	What's Up Doc?—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)	June 17
6712	All Abir-r-r-d—Merrie Melody (7 m.)	June 24
6807	Matty Malneck & Orch.—Melody Master (reissue) (10 m.)	June 24
6311	Booby Hatched—B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)	July 1
6405	So You Want to Hold Your Husband—Joe McDoakes (10 m.)	July 1
6509	Racing Thrills—Sports Parade (10 m.)	July 8
6723	8-Ball Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)	July 8
6713	It's Hummer Time—Merrie Melody (7 m.)	July 22
6808	Cliff Edwards & His Buckeroos—Melody Master (reissue) (10 m.)	July 22
6312	Trap Happy Porky—B.R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)	Aug. 5
6714	Golden Yeggs—Merrie Melody (7 m.)	Aug. 5
6606	Cavalcade of Girls—Novelty (10 m.)	Aug. 12
6724	Hillbilly Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)	Aug. 12
6406	So You Want to Move—Joe McDoakes (10 m.)	Aug. 19
6510	Champions of Tomorrow—Sports Parade (10 m.)	Aug. 19
6313	Lost & Foundling—B.R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)	Aug. 26
6715	Dog Gone South—Merrie Melody (7 m.)	Aug. 26
6716	The Dicksters—Looney Tune (7 m.)	Sept. 2
6717	A Fractured Leghorn—Looney Tune (7 m.)	Sept. 16
6725	Bunker Hill Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)	Sept. 23
6718	Canary Row—Looney Tune (7 m.)	Oct. 7
6726	Bushy Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)	Nov. 11

Vitaphone—Two Reels

6007	Give Me Liberty—Special (20 m.)	June 10
6106	Just for Fun—Featurette (20 m.)	July 15
6008	Sweden with Charlie McCarthy & Mortimer Snerd—Special (20 m.)	Sept. 3

NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

Warner Pathe News

91	Wed. (O)	June 28
92	Mon. (E)	July 3
93	Wed. (O)	July 5
94	Mon. (E)	July 10
95	Wed. (O)	July 12
96	Mon. (E)	July 17
97	Wed. (O)	July 19
98	Mon. (E)	July 24
99	Wed. (O)	July 26
100	Mon. (E)	July 31
101	Wed. (O)	Aug. 2
102	Mon. (E)	Aug. 7
103	Wed. (O)	Aug. 9
104	Mon. (E)	Aug. 14

Paramount News

90	Sat. (E)	July 1
91	Wed. (O)	July 5
92	Sat. (E)	July 8
93	Wed. (O)	July 12
94	Sat. (E)	July 15
95	Wed. (O)	July 19
96	Sat. (E)	July 22
97	Wed. (O)	July 26
98	Sat. (E)	July 29
99	Wed. (O)	Aug. 2
100	Sat. (E)	Aug. 5
101	Wed. (O)	Aug. 9
102	Sat. (E)	Aug. 12
103	Wed. (O)	Aug. 16

Fox Movietone

53	Friday (O)	June 30
54	Tues. (E)	July 4
55	Friday (O)	July 7
56	Tues. (E)	July 11
57	Friday (O)	July 14
58	Tues. (E)	July 18
59	Friday (O)	July 21
60	Tues. (E)	July 25
61	Friday (O)	July 28
62	Tues. (E)	Aug. 1
63	Friday (O)	Aug. 4
64	Tues. (E)	Aug. 8
65	Friday (O)	Aug. 11
66	Tues. (E)	Aug. 15
67	Friday (O)	Aug. 18

Universal News

364	Thurs. (E)	June 29
365	Tues. (O)	July 4
366	Thurs. (E)	July 6
367	Tues. (O)	July 11
368	Thurs. (E)	July 13
369	Tues. (O)	July 18
370	Thurs. (E)	July 20
371	Tues. (O)	July 25
372	Thurs. (E)	July 27
373	Tues. (O)	Aug. 1
374	Thurs. (E)	Aug. 3
375	Tues. (O)	Aug. 8
376	Thurs. (E)	Aug. 10
377	Tues. (O)	Aug. 15
378	Thurs. (E)	Aug. 17

News of the Day

286	Wed. (E)	June 28
287	Mon. (O)	July 3
288	Wed. (E)	July 5
289	Mon. (O)	July 10
290	Wed. (E)	July 12
291	Mon. (O)	July 17
292	Wed. (E)	July 19
293	Mon. (O)	July 24
294	Wed. (E)	July 26
295	Mon. (O)	July 31
296	Wed. (E)	Aug. 2
297	Mon. (O)	Aug. 7
298	Wed. (E)	Aug. 9
299	Mon. (O)	Aug. 14
300	Wed. (E)	Aug. 16

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ALLIED STEPS UP DRIVE AGAINST "MUST" PERCENTAGE DEMANDS

All the regional units of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, in an effort to acquaint the exhibitors in their territories with the promises and commitments made by the sales managers of the eight major distributing companies in regard to the elimination of "must" percentage selling to the smaller grossing theatres throughout the country, have mailed to both members and non-members in their areas a report made by the Allied "Must" Percentage Committee, which was created in the fall of 1948 for the purpose of contacting each of the eight sales managers to discuss with and obtain from them, if possible, a lessening of the pressure for percentage terms in the aforementioned theatres.

In a foreword to the report, the Committee points out that it visited New York twice during the winter of 1948-49 and again in April of this year. All the major sales managers were contacted on the first visit, and all except United Artists on the second. The foreword adds that the "flat selling yardstick" shown in the reports of the different distributors' sales policies is not rigid, and the figures stated are not necessarily maximum and have in many instances been exceeded by enterprising exhibitors.

The different regional bulletins point out that, before printing, the text of the report on each company was approved by the sales manager of the company involved as accurately expressing his statements to Allied's Percentage Committee.

Because the information contained in the Committee's reports is of great interest to all exhibitors, particularly those who are located in non-Allied territories and have not received a copy, HARRISON'S REPORTS is herewith reproducing the complete text of the reports on each company:

"Columbia—On the first visit, Mr. Abe Montague, General Sales Manager, stated that in every case where the exhibitor so desired and where the average gross on their A pictures was \$300 or less, Columbia would sell flat with the possible exclusion of a picture or pictures from outside producers.

"Upon our second visit the Committee thanked Mr. Montague for living up to and expanding his commitment on flat rentals. So far as we know the only exceptions in the past year and a half were the Jolson pictures.

"Mr. Montague, upon question of the Committee, stated that for more than a year Columbia has offered their entire product, excluding outside produced pictures, on a yearly contract with a 20% cancellation. This particular deal is set up for exhibitors paying up to \$75 for top pictures and in some territories as high as \$100. He further stated that in selling this contract, no specified number of pictures had to be purchased. This year's contract included all the product except 'Jolson Sings Again.'"

"20th Century-Fox—On our visit Andy Smith, General Sales Manager, would make no positive commitment on what theatres would be sold flat, but stated that their policy would be to increase flat rental picture deals as rapidly as possible in the smaller grossing situations.

"On our second visit (1950) Andy Smith still would

make no definite commitments on what theatres would be sold flat, but the Committee has found in actual practice that Fox is very generally selling on an all flat basis to theatres grossing as high as \$200 or even \$250 on their A product: in some territories this goes even as high as theatres grossing as much as \$600. Mr. Smith indicated that in all such situations being sold flat, sooner or later it would be necessary to get some kind of measuring rod. The Committee feels, however, that this does not necessarily entail a high percentage on such trial basis. Mr. Smith added that in such smaller situations he would prefer selling flat rental since economically this was the sounder business practice."

"Metro—On our first visit with Mr. William F. Rodgers, General Sales Manager, he advised the Committee that Metro would sell all flat in such situations where their film rental on their best productions ran \$200 or less. He stated, however, that once in a great while Metro might issue a picture of such class that they would feel percentage was necessary in every situation. He stated that there would be no obligation for the exhibitor to accept such percentage terms but that the picture could be passed without penalty in future dealing. During the past eighteen months there has only been one such picture: 'Battleground.'"

"Paramount—Mr. Charles M. Reagan was General Sales Manager on our first visit to New York. Mr. Reagan stated that at the present time (1949) his company is selling any exhibitor regardless of size on a flat rental basis, if desired. During the discussions, Mr. Reagan stated that the subterfuge of pricing the flat rental pictures so high as to force percentage was dishonest.

"At a later interview the same year, Mr. A. W. Schwalberg, who succeeded Mr. Reagan as General Sales Manager, said: 'What Charlie Reagan promised, I will deliver.'

"On our succeeding visit in 1950 Mr. Schwalberg modified that commitment with the statement that Paramount would sell all pictures to the smaller theatres flat rental with the reservation that there might be a picture on which they will demand must percentage. Mr. Schwalberg further stated that the formula for the conversion of accounts which had been formerly paying percentage, to flat rental, would be the average percentage earnings on the last four top pictures. Wherever any such top earning picture proved to be a sensational grosser (as, for example, 'Paleface'), and is disproportionate of the other top grossing pictures, such picture was to be excluded. The second bracket pictures would be figured approximately 70 to 75% of the flat rental price of the first bracket. Named as typical of such second bracket pictures now in release were the Alan Ladd pictures.

"Mr. Schwalberg further stated that he had put into effect last May (1949) a plan under which the smaller exhibitors of the country—those paying up to \$75 and occasionally up to \$100 for top pictures—could buy all Paramount pictures scheduled for release up to and including January 1, 1950. Such deal meant that the exhibitor was afforded an opportunity to acquire an inventory of Paramount pictures for the eight months period involved. All pictures not already trade shown carried a 20% cancellation privilege, such to be included in all contracts. He stated further that the field force was instructed to sell all of these accounts on a flat rental basis and to convert such accounts

(Continued on last page)

"The Cariboo Trail" with Randolph Scott and George "Gabby" Hayes

(20th Century-Fox, August; time, 81 min.)

Those who like their westerns with plenty of action, cattle stampedes, Indians, fisticuffs and gun-fighting will find that "The Cariboo Trail" more than adequately fills the bill. Its story about a rugged cattleman who treks from his native Montana into the Canadian wilds to find good cattle country is made up of standard melodramatic situations and characterizations and is not particularly novel; nevertheless, it is a satisfying entertainment of its kind, for it is swift-paced and adventurous. Randolph Scott's performance as the hero is characteristically hard-hitting and fearless, with audience sympathy on his side as he battles the lawless element and overcomes the many obstacles placed in his way. George "Gabby" Hayes, as a grizzled prospector, gives the proceedings some lighter moments with his humorous ways, and Karin Booth is properly attractive and winsome as the girl who comes to Scott's aid. Not the least of the picture's assets is the fine Cinecolor photography, which enhances the scenic values:—

In quest of gold and seeking new cattle country, Scott, Bill Williams, his partner, Lee Tung Foo, their Chinese cook, and their small herd of cattle are stopped on the trail at a small toll bridge owned by Victor Jory, whose four henchmen guarding the bridge demand an outrageous fee for them to cross. Scott refuses to pay and, in the ensuing fight, stampedes his cattle across the bridge, destroying it. Gabby, a lone prospector, meets and joins up with Scott's party. That night, Jory's henchmen stampede the cattle and steal the herd. Williams' arm is so badly hurt in the stampede that Scott has to amputate it. Scott then brings Williams to Carson Creek, where he is taken in by a doctor. At the local saloon, Scott becomes friendly with Karin, the owner, much to the chagrin of Jory, who desired her for himself. Jory pretends to know nothing about the stampede. With Williams under a doctor's care, Scott, Gabby and the Chinese cook set out to pan gold. They locate a beautiful valley, which Scott terms a cattleman's paradise, where they are ambushed and taken prisoners by Indians. All escape but are separated, and while wandering alone Scott discovers a gold pocket. Meanwhile Williams, now recovered but grown bitter over the loss of his arm, for which he blames Scott, joins Jory as his chief gunman. When Scott returns to Carson Creek he is rebuffed by Williams and run out of town by the miners, who are led by Jory to believe that he is withholding information on his gold strike. Back on the trail, Scott meets Gabby with a herd of cattle owned by his widowed sister-in-law, and makes a deal to lead the cattle to the beautiful valley. Jory, to get the cattle for himself, arranges with the Indians to massacre Scott and his party. Williams turns against this plan and persuades the miners to rescue the party from the Indians. In the battle that follows, the Indians are beaten and Jory and Williams shoot it out, killing each other. But before Williams dies, he and Scott patch up their quarrel.

It was produced by Nat Holt and directed by Edwin L. Marin from a screen play by Frank Gruber, based on a story by John Rhodes Sturdy.

Suitable for the family.

"Federal Man" with William Henry, Pamela Blake and Robert Shayne

(Eagle-Lion, June; time, 67 min.)

A run-of-the-mill low-budget program melodrama that should get by as a supporting feature in small-town and neighborhood theatres. Revolving around the efforts of Federal Narcotic Bureau agents to track down and apprehend a gang of criminals smuggling drugs over the Mexican border, the plot is stereotyped in formula and in treatment, offering little that hasn't been done many times in better productions. The pursuit, however, offers enough excitement and suspense to satisfy the indiscriminating action fans. The scientific methods employed by the Federal agents, such as radar detection to trace the course of an automobile transporting the dope, helps to keep the proceedings interesting. The acting and direction are adequate, despite the loosely-written screen play.

The story opens with the murder of Pamela Blake's husband, a narcotics agent, just as he leaves his home to report to Robert Shayne, his chief. Shayne assigns William Henry, another agent, to track down a ring of dope smugglers, whom he suspected of the murder of Pamela's husband. Having established that the criminals were smuggling dope across the Mexican border, Henry goes to that country and, with the aid of Mexican officials, discovers that the criminals carried on their activities by placing the narcotics in a box that was attached to the undercarriage of an automobile owned by an unsuspecting American tourist. The gang trailed the automobile back to the United States and removed the box without the owner becoming any wiser. Shayne, interested in learning the identity of the gang's leader and capturing him, orders Henry to permit a shipment of the drugs to cross the border and to trail it to its destination. In the events that follow, Henry, aided by Pamela, gets a line on the gang leader and sets a trap for him. But the plan backfires when the trap is discovered and Henry becomes the gang's captive. In the end, however, Shayne and the other agents trace Henry to the gang's hideout and, after a furious gun battle, Henry is rescued and the gang members either killed or captured.

It was produced by Jack Schwartz and directed by Robert Tansey from an original screen play by Sam Neuman and Nat Tanchuck.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The Baron of Arizona" with Vincent Price and Ellen Drew

(Lippert, March 4; time, 93 min.)

Produced on a budget that is considerably higher than the usual allotment given most Lippert productions, "The Baron of Arizona" offers a fascinating though not always convincing tale about a swindler's fantastic attempt to steal the territory of Arizona in the 1870's. The plot, which purportedly is based on fact, stresses characterization more than movement, but it does have a fair share of excitement and suspense and manages to hold one's interest fairly well. Vincent Price, as the patient and ambitious swindler, makes the most of his part, but Ellen Drew, as the woman he marries and tricks into believing that she is heir to the whole of Arizona, fails to put much conviction into the role, and her love for Price, despite knowledge of his fraudulent ways, is unbelievable.

On the whole, however, the picture is good enough to serve as the top feature of a double bill in secondary situations:—

Price, an ambitious land office clerk in Arizona, conceives a plan to take over the entire territory of Arizona by means of a forged Spanish land grant. To execute his plan, he builds a fake landmark in the desert and forges birth records to establish an orphan girl, cared for by a poor farmer, as the rightful heir to Arizona by reason of a Spanish grant made to her ancestors by King Ferdinand VI of Spain. Price arranges for the child to be raised and educated by Beulah Bondi, a governess, then sets out for Spain, where he enters a monastery as a monk for the purpose of altering Fifteenth Century land grant records, which were kept in the monastery's library. He accomplishes his mission after a period of three years, then leaves to forge and alter other necessary documents scattered in different parts of Mexico and Latin America, all of which he does by cheating, bribing and making love to several women. His work finished, Price returns to Arizona, where he marries the orphan girl, now grown to a young woman (Ellen Drew). He soon sets himself up as the "Baron of Arizona," with Ellen as his "Baroness," and lays claim to Arizona. The government, unable to disprove his claim, offers him \$25,000,000 as a settlement, but he rejects the offer and proceeds with plans to build an empire, infuriating the settlers who had established their homes in the territory. The irate settlers attempt to lynch him, but he succeeds in talking them out of it. Meanwhile Reed Hadley, a government expert, establishes proof that Price's claim was based on forgeries. He confronts Price with this evidence and compels him to confess the fraud. Sentenced to six years in prison, Price serves his term and, upon his release, finds Ellen waiting for him.

It was produced by Carl K. Hittleman and directed by Samuel Fuller, who wrote the original screen play.

Suitable for the family.

"Three Little Words" with Fred Astaire, Red Skelton, Vera-Ellen and Arlene Dahl
(MGM, August, time, 102 min.)

A thoroughly entertaining Technicolor musical, based on the lives and songs of Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby, the famous songwriting team. If the reception given the picture by a New York neighborhood audience at a preview is any criterion, it should prove to be one of the season's outstanding box-office attractions. The story itself is simple, but it is bright, gay and heartwarming, and is peppered with musical interludes that are highly enjoyable as well as nostalgic, for all the songs were favorite hit tunes in the 1920's. The melodious music, combined with the nimble-footed dancing of Fred Astaire and Vera-Ellen, and the clowning of Red Skelton, makes for sure-fire entertainment that will please and relax all types of picture-goers. Skelton, as Harry Ruby, is cast in a role that is more subdued than is usual for him, but he is very good in the part, as is Astaire, as Bert Kalmar. Vera-Ellen and Arlene Dahl are charming as the girls with whom the songwriters fall in love, and Keenan Wynn is amusing in a minor part as the team's manager. The color photography is fine,

and the production values are up to the usual lavish MGM standard:—

As a vaudeville song-and-dance team, Astaire and Vera-Ellen do well, but he does not respond to the love she feels for him and concerns himself mainly with magic—his hobby. While trying out a magic act alone under another name, Astaire meets Skelton, a stagehand and aspiring songwriter, whose hobby was baseball. Skelton bumbles the magic props so badly that he ruins the act and puts an end to Astaire's career as a professional magician. Astaire goes back to dancing with Vera-Ellen, but he injures his knee and is unable to dance for a year. Vera-Ellen, hoping that Astaire would take this opportunity to marry her, is disappointed when he turns his attentions to songwriting and teams up with Skelton; she arranges to continue her vaudeville career alone. Astaire and Skelton become a promising songwriting team, but with Vera-Ellen away Astaire finds a void in his life. Skelton, aware of the reason for his partner's unhappiness, intervenes, and before long Astaire and Vera-Ellen are married. She retires from the stage and devotes herself to keeping Astaire and Skelton from quarrelling because of their respective hobbies. Meanwhile Skelton falls in love with Arlene, a young actress, and marries her. Both men become highly successful writing words and music for Broadway shows and moving pictures, but a split occurs between them over a minor misunderstanding. Neither one is happy without the other, but each is too stubborn to admit it. Their wives, however, are instrumental in bringing them together again for the happy ending.

It was produced by Jack Cummings and directed by Richard Thorpe from a screen play by George Wells. The cast includes Gale Robbins, Gloria de Haven, Phil Regan and many others.

Fine for the entire family.

**SOUND ADVICE FROM
NEW ENGLAND ALLIED**

A recent bulletin of New England Allied had this to say on the subject of film rentals:

"From where we sit *this is the time right now* to get your film rentals cut down to a level that will give you a profit. This may sound foolish to many of our exhibitors; but frankly, we are aware of many situations that have gotten little or no relief since the beginning of the *Decline and Fall of Grosses*.

"As we have cited before, if your gross is off 22%, it is not asking too much to expect your film rental to be decreased a like amount percentage-wise. For example, if your gross was \$600 per week and your rental for film 25% of the gross, your rental was \$150 per week. Now your gross is off 22% of \$600 or \$132 leaving you a new gross of \$468 per week. Likewise your \$150 per week film costs should be slashed 22% or \$33, leaving a new film cost of \$117 per week. Checking this we find that your 25% film rental is being maintained.

"Don't think for one minute that any distributor representative is going to 'cotton' to your logic; but nevertheless, you are being logical and if you don't fight for this, you pay and pay as long as you are able.

"Take the bull by the horns and don't let your film rental become a matter of your existence, make it an equitable payment so that you can live with it."

from percentage to flat rental where the percentage had previously been sold."

"RKO—Mr. Robert Mochrie, General Sales Manager, on our first visit made no commitments on selling any theatre on flat rental basis.

"On our visit in 1950 Mr. Mochrie stated that he was sympathetic to the Committee's plan on flat rentals. He said that he was selling more and more theatres flat rental today (and the Committee finds that this is true), but that he would make no general commitment."

"United Artists—On our first visit (1949) Mr. Gradwell L. Sears, President, stated that he had no reservation in selling any of his pictures to any exhibitor on a flat rental basis. He advised the Committee that he had sold pictures like 'Red River' flat. He said his position was sometimes complicated by some producer reserving the right to approve contracts.

"In 1950 we attempted to contact both Mr. Sears and his General Sales Manager, Mr. Lazurus, but both of these gentlemen were out of town, and we were unable to see them."

"Universal—On our first visit with Mr. William Scully, General Sales Manager, he would make no promises or commitments.

"On our second visit in 1950 Mr. Scully still would make no commitments.

"The Committee finds that Universal generally is demanding percentage not only on their top bracket pictures but in varying degrees on down the line into the second and even third brackets.

"The Committee discussed with Mr. Scully changing to flat rentals instead of percentage and suggested that Universal, where it found a situation unalterably opposed to percentage, offer a flat rental deal even on their A product, based on experience with other Universal pictures in the same situation. Mr. Scully and his assistant, Mr. O'Keefe, thought that suggestion might have merit and promised further consideration.

"Within the past few days our Committee Chairman who had received a report from Iowa-Nebraska that Universal was starting such a practice, wrote Mr. Scully. We quote Mr. Scully's reply in answer to our letter:

"We acknowledge a copy of your communication . . . in reference to the Universal deals in Iowa-Nebraska.

"This is being tried at the suggestion of you and your Committee and is also being tried in Texas and other parts of the country.

"We are trying out the suggestion made at our conference, and we hope it turns out satisfactorily for the Exhibitor as well as ourselves.

"Yours very truly,
"W. A. Scully"

"Warner Brothers—In our 1949 interview with Mr. Ben Kalmenson, General Sales Manager, he stated that the Warner policy at that time was to eliminate percentage in theatres grossing up to \$150 on A pictures. This was done by Warners for the reason that, on the average, checking costs more than offset the extra film rental.

"On our second visit, April 1950, Mr. Kalmenson stated that he had gone further than his commitment in converting to flat rentals in the smaller theatres. He said that in all probability it would be still further expanded where this was economically sound. He said that Warners had sold more flat rentals this past year than in the previous ten years. From our information throughout the country, we believe this to be a fact."

In making the foregoing reports available to all exhibitors, the Allied regional units point out that copies have been sent also to the branch managers of every exchange in the country so that they and their salesmen will know the flat selling policy laid down by their general sales managers.

"If your theatre is one of those included in the classifica-

tion," says Pete J. Wood in the service bulletin of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, "the sales policy has definitely and positively been laid down by the Big Boss of the salesman who visits you to sell pictures. Don't let that salesman bluff you into paying more."

The Allied "Must" Percentage Committee, comprised of Col. H. A. Cole, chairman, and Irving Dollinger, Wilbur Snaper, Sidney Samuelson and Charles Niles, is to be congratulated for the fine progress it has made in the Allied campaign to eliminate "must" percentage terms in the nation's smaller theatres, most of which are having a difficult time to remain in existence.

Allied may be proud of a service well done for all exhibitors, the smaller ones in particular, for the valuable information contained in the Committee's reports should enable many of them to combat the too ambitious salesman and to establish live-and-let-live film rentals.

A PUBLIC RELATIONS JOB THAT IS AT ONCE A BOX-OFFICE STIMULANT

National Kids' Day, the nationwide project sponsored by the more than 3100 Kiwanis Clubs of the United States and Canada for the benefit of underprivileged children, will be observed this year on September 23 and, like last year, the National Kids' Day Foundation, of which Jimmie Fidler, the famous syndicated columnist and radio commentator on motion picture matters, is president, is seeking the cooperation of the nation's exhibitors to make this worthwhile drive a success.

Working with Roy Rogers, the cowboy star, and Herbert J. Yates, president of Republic Pictures, Mr. Fidler has devised a method of exhibitor participation that will not only cost the exhibitor nothing but actually increase his box-office receipts and at the same time win for him the good will of the community because of his support of so praiseworthy a cause.

Briefly, the plan calls for a tieup of the exhibitor's theatre, its Roy Rogers Rider's Club members, numbering nearly 2,000,000 nationally, and the National Kids' Day lapel buttons. The exhibitor will be furnished with lapel buttons, free of charge, and each Rider's Club member would be given ten buttons to be sold for 10c each to friends, neighbors and relatives. When the youngster sells his ten buttons and turns in the one dollar collected, the exhibitor is to retain 50c, giving the boy or girl as many admission tickets as that 50c will buy, to be good until used. The remaining 50c is to go into the National Kids' Day Fund, and when the drive is over on September 23 one-half of all the money collected is to be forwarded to the National Kids' Day Foundation.

The idea, of course, is for the exhibitor to generate a competitive spirit among the youngsters by offering prizes to those who sell the most buttons. An enterprising exhibitor should have little trouble promoting these prizes from local merchants.

Since the drive will be given wide publicity on the national and local level, the idea of the button sales offers the exhibitor a golden opportunity to not only raise funds for a worthy movement and win genuine good will for his theatre but to also boost his theatre receipts through advance ticket sales—and all at no cost to him. The plan does not burden the exhibitor; on the contrary, the exhibitor is helped to fill his seats.

Aside from the fact that the exhibitor who participates in this drive will benefit through paid-in-advance admissions, the plan is a natural insofar as it concerns the building of public relations for the individual theatre as well as the industry as a whole, for there is no quicker and better way to capture the good will of the public than by doing something for children, particularly the underprivileged.

Those of you who are interested in joining this drive should communicate with Jimmie Fidler, National Kids' Day Foundation, 1765 Gower Street, Hollywood 28, California.

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No. 28

KOREAN CONFLICT CAUSES TAX CUT DELAY

A severe blow to the industry's hopes for the early elimination or reduction of the 20% Federal tax on admissions was suffered this week when the House-approved bill to cut excise taxes was laid aside by Congressional leaders at the request of President Truman, who felt that it would not be prudent, in the light of present developments in Korea, for the Senate to proceed with further consideration of the tax bill.

As a result of this suggestion, it is feared that no tax-cutting legislation would be passed during this session of Congress.

With the country faced with the possibility of increased military appropriations because of the Korean war and other international developments, the action taken by President Truman and supported by the Congressional leaders of both political parties is understandable. Industryites who have been active in the tax battle need not despair, however, for if and when Congress again takes up the enactment of a tax-cutting bill the result should be favorable to the industry since the overwhelming majority of Congressmen and Senators have pledged themselves as being in favor of either the complete elimination or a substantial reduction of the 20% tax on admissions.

There is no doubt that the COMPO Committee on Taxation and Legislation, headed by Mr. Abram F. Myers, will decide on a plan of coordinated action whereby the exhibitors, pending renewal of Congressional consideration of a tax cut, will keep alive the interest of their Congressmen and Senators in the fact that the burdensome admission tax is having a serious effect on theatre attendance.

There must be no letdown in the efforts of individual exhibitors to keep their Congressional representatives constantly aware of the damaging effect the admission tax is having on their business. It is the most effective approach because, generally speaking, Congressmen and Senators are interested only in the views of their constituents.

Mr. Myers and the members of his committee have done an outstanding job in leading the industry's unified tax battle, and it is indeed unfortunate that international conditions have compelled Congress to abandon indefinitely passage of the excise-cutting bill, thus delaying the victory they have so well earned. It behooves the exhibitors throughout the country to send a note of appreciation to Mr. Myers and the members of his committee for their untiring efforts in this tax battle, pledging full cooperation on whatever future action they may decide upon.

THE POSSIBLE ANSWER TO THE BOX-OFFICE BLUES

In an effort to boost declining box-office receipts and to combat television competition, a group of leading circuit owners have formed a new production company, Cinema Productions, Inc., for the purpose of producing a series of twelve novelty and experimental feature pictures designed to enable exhibitors to offer their patrons entertainment that is not available on television.

According to trade paper reports, the circuit owners interested in the new company include Fred Schwartz, M. A. Lightman, Sam Pinanski, Si Fabian, George Skouras, Frank Walker, Mitchell Wolfson, Sam Rinzler, Harold Stoneman and Robert Dowling.

The first project on the program is a third-dimension type of picture, titled "The Customer's Always Right," which will be produced by Lester Cowan, who is a vice-president of the new firm. Mr. Cowan is now casting the picture on the Coast and hopes to get into production in New York some time in August.

Mr. Cowan has told the press that the Polaroid method of third-dimension will be employed in the production of this initial film. This process, he claims, was developed by the Polaroid Corporation for the Army and Navy for use in World War II, and is an improvement over the Polaroid method developed some twenty years previously.

From what Mr. Cowan claims for this new process, it does appear to have distinct advantages over the old process which, in the opinion of this paper, was not practical for use in commercial motion picture exhibition.

Under the old process, for example, the production of a three-dimensional picture required the use of either two different cameras to shoot the picture at the same time, each camera photographing what one eye supposedly sees, or a single camera of special construction, running at double speed, shooting alternately "right eye" and "left eye" views. Then the two positives, printed from two negatives, had to be projected on the screen by two projectors simultaneously, each projector throwing one picture, the two projected pictures meeting on the screen and, when suitably viewed through spectacles made of Polaroid glass, blending into one picture. The effect, of course, was to make the objects in the picture stand out as do still pictures when viewed through a stereoscope.

Under the new process, however, as claimed by Mr. Cowan, a single specially constructed camera is

(Continued on back page)

"Abbott and Costello in The Foreign Legion"

(Univ.-Int'l, August; time, 80 min.)

On a par with the last few Abbott & Costello slapstick comedies; that is, it should give satisfaction to those who enjoy this comedy team's brand of clowning and do not mind their repetitious antics. Others may find it tiresome, for the story is insipid and the comedy situations are, at times, milked for much more than they are worth. Moreover, the action has a tendency to lag. But discriminating patrons who are amused easily should find a fair share of laughs in the broad comedy antics of this pair as a result of their misadventures in Algiers when they unwittingly become members of the Foreign Legion. As a matter of fact, the only difference between this picture and the previous A & C pictures is the locale; the story formula itself is familiar.

This time the boys are cast as wrestling promoters who go to Algeria to locate and bring back to the United States an Arabian wrestler who had run out on a contract he had with them. Once in Algiers, the boys run afoul of Douglas Dumbrille, a desert sheik, when they inadvertently interfere with his harassing of the Foreign Legion in an effort to stop the construction of a railroad line. To teach the boys a lesson, Walter Slezak, a sergeant in the Legion, who was secretly in cahoots with Dumbrille, dupes them into signing enlistment papers. From then on they become involved in a series of wild misadventures with slave girls, including Patricia Medina, a beautiful French spy, and in the course of events make a shambles of the Legion's boot-training camp. Meanwhile Dumbrille and Slezak hatch a plot to wipe out the Legionnaires in a surprise Arab attack, but the boys uncover the plot and in their own blundering way defeat the Arab forces and emerge as heroes.

It was produced by Robert Arthur and directed by Charles Lamont from a screen play by John Grant, Martin Ragaway and Leonard Stern, based on a story by D. D. Beauchamp. Harmless for the family.

"Union Station" with William Holden, Nancy Olson and Barry Fitzgerald

(Paramount, September; time, 80 min.)

"Union Station" is a highly exciting thriller that grips one's interest from start to finish. Revolving around the kidnapping of the blind 18-year-old daughter of a wealthy industrialist, the construction of the plot is skillful and the action is loaded with suspense and thrills as the ingenious kidnappers and the police, both using a huge railway station for their operations, try to outsmart each other. What helps to keep the action at a high pitch of excitement are several chases through a stockyards, an elevated railroad and a network of tunnels underneath the huge terminal. William Holden turns in a deft performance as the two-fisted head of the railway police, and Barry Fitzgerald is equally good as the head city detective, giving the role just the right touch of humor. Lyle Bettger, as the ruthless kidnapper, is outstanding:—

Nancy Olson, a secretary, aboard a train heading back to the city from the suburban home of Herbert Heyes, her employer, notices two suspicious looking passengers, one of whom carried a concealed gun. Alarmed, she notifies the conductor, who in turn wires ahead to Holden. Nancy is met by Holden at the terminal and together they follow the two men into the station and watch them place a suitcase in a coin-

operated locker, then put the key into an envelope and mail it. Holden orders a detective to follow the suspects, then removes the suitcase to examine it. Nancy is shocked to find that it contained a scarf belonging to Allene Roberts, her employer's blind daughter, and a quick telephone call to Heyes confirms Holden's suspicions that the girl had been kidnapped. To make matters worse, the detective assigned to follow the suspects reports that they had given him the slip. Holden calls Fitzgerald into the case and both advise Heyes to follow to the letter all instructions given to him by the kidnappers to keep a rendezvous in the station for the purpose of making contact for the payment of a ransom. Meanwhile they enlist Nancy's aid to identify the kidnappers and scatter an army of plainclothesmen throughout the depot to close in on the culprits. Aware that the police may be waiting, Lyle Bettger, head of the kidnappers, arranges for two of his accomplices to make the contact, but through clever work by Nancy both are caught by the police, one dying before he can be questioned while the other, frightened by threats of violence, discloses where Bettger was holding Allene captive. Bettger escapes from the hiding place with Allene, brings her to a tunnel underneath the station and, through an ingenious scheme, manages to collect the ransom money from Heyes despite the presence of Holden and all the other police who were waiting for him to keep the rendezvous. But Holden spots the scheme just as Bettger flees with the money. He gives chase, and the pursuit leads to the tunnel, where he kills Bettger in a gun duel and rescues Allene.

It was produced by Jules Schermer and directed by Rudolph Mate from a screen play by Sydney Boehm, based on a story by Thomas Walsh.

Unobjectionable morally.

"711 Ocean Drive" with Edmond O'Brien, Joanne Dru and Otto Kruger

(Columbia, July; time, 102 min.)

Producer Frank N. Seltzer has fashioned a gripping and highly exploitable melodrama in "711 Ocean Drive," which is an expose of the wire-service gambling racket. In addition to the picture's own merit, it should benefit considerably from the publicity it has received from Congressional investigation of charges that underworld forces attempted to block its production. Its story about the rise of an aggressive telephone repair man to a big-time bookie is not pleasant, for it involves cheating, blackmail and murder, yet it grips one's attention because of the graphic way in which it exposes the tricks and devices employed in the bookie racket, and the cunning but illegal manner in which wire services furnish the bookies with information on horse races from the tracks. Boulder Dam, with its massive labyrinth of generators, tunnels and weird stairways, serves as the actual background for a highly thrilling chase at the finish. The entire action, in fact, has been filmed at the actual locales named in the story. The direction and acting are fine, and the photography exceptional:—

Because of his knowledge of electronics, Edmond O'Brien, a telephone repairman with a yen for an easy dollar, is hired by Barry Kelley, owner of a wire service that furnished Los Angeles bookies with up-to-the-minute information from the tracks. By employing the latest technical advancements in telephony and electronics, O'Brien enables Kelley to expand his service to hundreds of bookies in several states,

thereby increasing his income many fold. O'Brien, threatening to quit, compels Kelley to give him a cut of the profits, and later, when Kelley is murdered by a disgruntled clicnt, O'Brien takes over the operation and through daring and cunning becomes one of the biggest bookies on the coast. Before long, however, he is "persuaded" to join forces with a powerful Eastern syndicate controlled by Otto Kruger and represented by Donald Porter. O'Brien falls in love with Joanne Dru, Porter's wife, who hated her husband. Learning that the syndicate had been short-changing him on the profits, and that Porter had been beating Joanne, O'Brien hires Robert Osterloh, a killer, to murder Porter. Later, O'Brien murders Osterloh when he attempts to blackmail him. He decides to flee the country with Joanne, but first engineers an ingenious scheme whereby he wins a fortune from Kruger by intercepting race results and placing bets before they reach Kruger's bookies. Kruger discovers the double-cross just as the police trace Osterloh's murder to O'Brien. With both the police and the underworld on his trail, O'Brien, accompanied by Joanne, heads for other parts. They encounter a roadblock set up by the police on Boulder Dam and, after a hectic chase through the vast structure, Joanne is captured and O'Brien cut down by police bullets.

It was directed by Joseph H. Newman from an original screen play by Richard English and Francis Swan. Adult fare.

**"A Lady Without Passport" with
Hedy Lamarr and John Hodiak**
(MGM, August; time, 72 min.)

Although the running time is unusually short considering the magnitude of the stars, this is an interesting romantic melodrama revolving around the efforts of an American immigration inspector to track down a gang of racketeers smuggling aliens into the United States from Cuba. Capably directed and acted, it is a swiftly-paced story, with enough romance and high spots of melodramatic action to appeal to the rank-and-file movie-goers. A particularly good chase sequence, highlighted by some outstanding aerial photography, is where a plane carrying a group of illegal immigrants is forced down by a Navy plane in the Florida swamplands and the passengers caught after a futile attempt to escape. Much of the action was shot against actual Havana backgrounds, adding much to one's interest in the proceedings:—

Posing as a refugee seeking admittance to the United States, John Hodiak, an immigration inspector, seeks evidence against George Macready, leader of the alien smuggling gang. He makes contact with Macready in Havana and through him meets Hedy Lamarr, a Vienna refugee, with whom he falls in love, much to the chagrin of Macready, who desired her for himself. In the course of events, Macready's henchmen discover Hodiak's true identity, and Macready uses this information to turn Hedy against him, claiming that he had been using her as a dupe. Despite Hodiak's offer to marry her so that she may become an American citizen, Hedy listens to Macready's overtures and joins him and several other aliens on an illegal flight to the United States. Hodiak notifies his superior of the flight and an intense search with Navy planes is set into motion. Finding a Navy plane on his tail, Macready crash lands in the Everglades. The location of the landing is reported and Hodiak sets out for the spot. He catches up with Macready after a hectic chase and, to save Hedy from harm,

permits Macready to make a shortlived escape. Hedy prepares to pay the penalty for entering the country illegally but looks forward to a happy future with Hodiak.

It was produced by Samuel Marx and directed by Joseph H. Lewis from a screen play by Howard Dimsdale, based on a story by Lawrence Taylor.

Suitable for the family.

KEEP THEM OPEN!

H. V. (Rotus) Harvey, board chairman of the Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners, had this to say in a current bulletin under the above heading:

"Every day we hear about another theatre closing its doors . . . out of business . . . another exhibitor or theatre manager out of work, disillusioned, his dreams shattered, his investment gone!

"Most of these theatres are the so-called marginal theatres, that is, up to this time. BUT, there are about six to eight thousand theatres in the United States rapidly facing the possibility of 'turning out the lights.' These are NOT wartime babies. They are subsequent run theatres and theatres in small communities.

"Grosses have been dropping and expenses have been steadily increasing over the years. The two lines have crossed . . . result? Losses!

"Something MUST be done. The motion picture industry will suffer greatly IF these theatres are closed. Theatre patrons are creatures of habit and closed theatres break that habit.

"CUT EXPENSES? HOW? You cannot cut Projectionists' wages, the unions won't let you. Pay their scale or close up! If it is a non-union town you will find the scales already at a minimum. In California you must pay a minimum of 65c per hour for women and minors, so you can't cut there. Taxes have gone up EVERY year and you can't cut them. Rent? Every exhibitor has tried . . . no results.

"FILM RENTAL—In most of these situations film rentals are running ABOVE 40% and many times over 50%, and the Distributors WILL NOT cut. They do not care about these small theatres, they're perfectly willing to LET THEM CLOSE . . . they cannot be bothered.

"We know it costs money to produce pictures and we know producers' overheads are high. BUT, we also can read what astronomical salaries and bonuses are paid to their Executives.

"In the so-called NORMAL DAYS, small theatres could buy features from \$10.00 up; sometimes as low as \$7.50. Now the only thing you can get for \$12.50 is JUNK which you are ashamed to run.

"It is not a question of the admission prices being too high. These small theatres are only charging from 40c to 50c and then when they take out Uncle Sam's blood money what is left? 33c and 42c.

"Uncle Carl Laemmle, when he was active, once had what was called a 'Universal Complete Service Contract.' He gave you a feature, comedy and newsreel for \$12.50 up—ONCE A WEEK—and he made MILLIONS on it until some wisecrack unsold him.

"Why doesn't some Major Distributor, who has this business at heart, revive this deal and offer it to those theatres that are struggling to keep open? It will not only cost them nothing, they will make money. Remember you cannot sell a closed theatre; that revenue is gone!"

used for shooting the picture and, instead of having two prints projected simultaneously by two projection machines, only one positive print, which is printed on both sides of the same strip of film, is required and this may be projected with the exhibitor's standard equipment, thus eliminating the need for two additional projection machines and the employment of twice the number of projectionists, as well as the possible enlargement of the projection booth.

An added advantage, according to Mr. Cowan, is that the Polaroid glasses used today, unlike the red-and-blue glasses used years ago, will provide no strain on the eyes of the audience.

In the old days, one of the most important problems that needed solving before third-dimension pictures could be exhibited to audiences satisfactorily was the manner in which each theatre was to supply its patrons with glasses. This problem had a number of phases, such as cost to the exhibitor, breakage, the different sizes of glasses needed, sterilization, etc.

To an extent, these problems are overcome by the present Polaroid system in that the glasses that will be provided are made of a gelatin sheet in a cardboard frame, and at a cost that is so nominal that the patrons may keep them and may, by reversing them, use them as sun glasses.

Three-dimensional pictures may pose other problems that cannot be foreseen just now.

Whether or not this type of film will prove successful from the entertainment and box-office points of view remains to be seen. Meanwhile Mr. Cowan and the exhibitors financing him are to be commended for their attempt to give the industry the shot-in-the-arm it needs so badly.

ART HAS ITS PLACE

In an article that appeared in the program book of the annual convention of Allied Theatre Owners of New Jersey, Mr. Abram F. Myers, National Allied's general counsel and chairman of the board, had this to say in part about the declining popularity of motion pictures:

"A large part—perhaps the major part—of the trouble can be traced to the marked change in the attitude of reviewers and critics in recent years. I can remember when the good pictures all received 'rave notices' and the good points of even minor pictures were stressed. Now only the most outstanding productions are commented on favorably and even the best occasionally suffer from snide remarks. The most overworked word in the drab lexicon of these self-conscious high-brows is 'mediocre' and it is applied indiscriminately without regard to the entertainment value of the pictures. The good old-fashioned 'rave' notices now are reserved for the small number of pictures in which the ivory tower boys think they detect some obscure artistic merit or which convey a message on some issue of doubtful public interest. Honest sentiment and belly-laughs amount to nothing in the estimate of these not-so-amiable gentlemen, even though they still are loved by the theatre-going public.

"I am not so foolish as to suppose that any great number of people will accept this theory in preference to their own pet ideas. But along with all the others

it deserves careful investigation. I personally hope that when COMPO gets underway it will launch a research project to determine the causes for the declining popularity of the movies and to propose remedies therefore. If that comes to pass, I feel sure that trained investigators will find that the critics have strayed far from their essential duty to inform their readers whether the pictures reviewed possess those qualities which make for entertainment and whether their readers will enjoy seeing them. The people consult the amusement page of the daily paper not for a lecture on art or sociology, but for guidance in their quest for pleasure, and the sooner some reviewers get back on the job, the sooner the present trend away from the movies will be reversed."

Mr. Myers has touched upon a subject that should be given deep thought by the nation's motion picture critics, particularly those who are too literary and artistic in their ideas of what constitutes good motion picture entertainment for the great majority of moviegoers.

Mr. Myers' remarks bring to mind a speech delivered by Mr. Howard S. Cullman in 1936 at the School of Education, New York University. Mr. Cullman, at that time, was Receiver of the Roxy Theatre, New York City. The following excerpts from his speech are as applicable today as they were in 1936:

"... to the average American, thinking is the direct antithesis of entertainment. That which is difficult to grasp is, by its very nature, not amusing. The film, therefore, ... must be readily understood by the lowest as well as the highest intelligence in the audience.

"... mass entertainment ... must cause emotional excitement of some kind. This is most readily attained through stimulation of the primary passions such as love, fear, hate and pity. ...

"As a business, the motion picture has, to a very large extent, learned its lesson. It has discovered that good merchandise must be built of sound ingredients; that expert acting, camera work and direction, without an adequate story, will produce feeble results; it has accepted the fact that production, distribution and exhibition can and must be carried on in a fundamental business-like fashion. All this cannot be accomplished when one is one jump ahead of the sheriff. ...

"The prospect is encouraging to those of us who are interested in an adequate supply of salable popular entertainment. For those who cherish hopes of a cinematic art acceptable to esthetes and intellectuals the situation appears less promising. They can expect to find on the screen a progressively improved brand of amusement, utilizing each year the talents of an increasing number of gifted individuals. They will find plenty of hearty laughs and abundance of breathtaking thrills; but for their moments of true mental and spiritual stimulation I fear they will have to hie themselves to the concert halls, theatres and museums, wherein flourish the true arts."

If any motion picture critic in your city has, as Mr. Myers says, strayed from his (or her) essential duty to inform the readers whether the pictures reviewed possess those qualities that make for popular entertainment, this paper suggests that you clip this article and send it to him or her.

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Vol. XXXII

SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1950

No. 29

ALLIED TO GATHER IN CHICAGO FOR ACTION AGAINST EXCESSIVE FILM TERMS

Colonel H. A. Cole, chairman of National Allied's committee for the elimination of forced percentage selling, has sent the following telegram to all Allied regional units and Caravan groups:

"With complaints pouring in from all over the country covering extortionate film rental demands, both flat and percentage, and with steadily declining box-office, the time has come when some considerate thought and drastic action is necessary. From one territory we hear of demands for 37½ per cent film rental for subsequent-run neighborhood houses where top demands heretofore on A product, not super productions, has not been in excess of 35 per cent, which in itself is much too high. In other territories we hear of Branch Managers (not salesmen) refusing to consider the impossibility of percentage terms demanded, even though exhibitors offer to open their books, the Branch Manager stating that he is not interested in whether exhibitor makes money or not. Some progress was made by Allied Percentage Committee covering very small situations, but no relief apparent for the great mass of theatres not in such group. A national mass meeting of exhibitors on this subject could get nowhere unless intelligent planning and an intelligent campaign is formulated by some central group. Allied Caravan and its National Committee is the only organized group formed for this immediate purpose. I have myself no definite plan in mind, but believe that a gathering of representatives of all regional Caravan units could arrive at some plan for action. Film companies are taking advantage of competitive situations and the bidding system to still further hike film prices and terms. This is accentuated by large number of drive-in theatres, many of whom are new in the business and unfamiliar with usual film prices and terms. Therefore, a meeting of representatives from local Caravan organizations is called at the Congress Hotel, Chicago, July 26-27. If you have not already made hotel reservations through us for such meeting, please wire me at once."

The present outcry against excessive film rentals and terms, as evidenced by Colonel Cole's statements in his telegram, and by the statement issued last week by H. V. (Rotus) Harvey, chairman of the board of trustees of the Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners, reflects an unyielding attitude on the part of the producer-distributors, and unless there is an abrupt change in their selling policies the result may be disastrous to all concerned.

In spite of the fact that complaints against high film rentals are numerous and insistent, and are com-

ing from all parts of the country, some distributor representatives are inclined to look upon this outcry as the usual squawk from exhibitors who are chronic complainers but who manage to remain in business year after year. Such an attitude is indeed shocking and discouraging, particularly since the film companies themselves, through their branch offices, reported to COMPO'S tax committee that 580 theatres had closed their doors permanently in the six-month period from December, 1949 to May, 1950. Just how many more theatres have closed down since May has not been ascertained, but the number must be considerable in view of the fact that there has been no halt in the steady box-office decline.

There is a limit to what the exhibitors can pay for film. Asking them to pay rentals that cannot, even if the pictures were to be exploited intensively, leave them with a profit, is a poor business practice on the part of the producer-distributors, for, as Mr. Harvey pointed out in his statement, "... you cannot sell a closed theatre; that revenue is gone!"

The two-day Chicago meeting called by Allied, coupled with the strong protest of the West Coast exhibitors against high film rentals, should indicate to the distributors that storm clouds are gathering.

THINGS TO COME!

Now that President Truman has asked Congress for ten billion dollars and for broad authority to win the war in Korea and to protect the world against the threat of Communist aggression, it can be expected that Congress will speedily enact legislation that will once again put the nation on a war footing.

To carry out the vast program of rearmament, the President requested, and will no doubt be granted, authority to establish priorities and allocate essential defense materials, and to requisition supplies needed for national defense. This means that in due time you may find it difficult to obtain replacement parts, and for this reason you should take steps immediately to conserve on every item and carefully supervise its use.

Such items, for example, as tubes and electric bulbs, theatre chairs, carpets, carbon tetrachloride, freon gas, projector carbons, cleaning solvents, soaps and many other materials that are vital in theatre operation may be as hard to get as during the last war.

Motors and machinery should be repaired now and kept in first-class condition, and projectors and sound equipment in particular should be given constant vigilance.

Proper care now will save you headaches later, and prevent the possibility of a dark house.

**"Copper Canyon" with Ray Milland,
Hedy Lamarr and Macdonald Carey**
(Paramount, October; time, 83 min.)

A pretty good western-type melodrama, photographed in Technicolor. The story itself offers nothing unusual, for it follows the old established formula of the hero's dropping into town and taking the side of justice against the lawless element, but it holds one's interest well because of the expert direction and the capable acting. The dyed-in-the-wool western fans may find it a bit too talky in spots, but on the whole it has more than a fair quota of suspense and exciting action, as well as comedy and romance. The restraint with which Ray Milland portrays a cool trick shot artist makes his heroics doubly effective. Hedy Lamarr is satisfactory as the glamorous dance-hall queen with whose wiles Milland has to cope, and Macdonald Carey is properly deceitful and ruthless as the villain. The magnitude of the stars should draw to the box-office movie-goers who do not ordinarily patronize westerns:—

When former Confederate soldiers seeking to recoup their fortunes in Coppertown are driven to the wall by the ruthless Northern owners of the only smelter in the area who refused to buy their ore except on their own terms, they go to Nevada City to appeal to Ray Milland, a trick shot performer, whom they believed to be a fabulous Confederate hero who had escaped from Federal prison after being captured by the Union Army. Milland denies that he is the famous hero lest he be arrested as a fugitive, and refuses to offer assistance. Several days later, however, he arrives in Coppertown with a troupe of entertainers, and immediately starts using his charms on Hedy Lamarr, owner of the saloon, much to the annoyance of Carey, a murderous deputy sheriff who, together with other crooked deputies, was in the pay of the smelter owners to create havoc with the small mine operations and keep their owners subjugated. Milland's sense of justice is aroused when he sees Carey and his henchmen kill three of the Southerners in cold blood; he secretly joins the small mine owners in a plan to ship their ore to another smelter thirty miles away, a move that Carey had thus far blocked. Learning of the plan through a confederate who pretended to be one of the Southerners, Carey calls upon Hedy to use her wiles to keep Milland from leading the ore wagon train. Hedy was part of the conspiracy to force the small owners to sell their mines and quit the territory. Milland, seeing through Hedy, foils her attempt to get him drunk and, in a daring maneuver as a masked rider, breaks up an attempt by Carey and his henchmen to wreck the wagon train. In the complicated events that follow, Carey, to dispose of Milland's interference, steals the money the Southerners had collected for their ore, frames Milland for the robbery, and jails him. Hedy, by this time in love with Milland and resentful of Carey's murderous tactics, bribes a jailer to free him. Once out of jail, Milland rallies the small mine owners and launches a furious attack that ends with the death of Carey and his crooked deputies. With the small mine owners now assured of a square deal in the future, Milland leaves Coppertown with Hedy to start a new life together.

It was produced by Mel Epstein and directed by John Farrow from a screen play by Jonathan Letimer, based on a story by Richard English. The cast includes Mona Freeman, Harry Carey, Jr., Frank Faylen and many others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Fancy Pants" with Bob Hope
and Lucille Ball**

(Paramount, Sept.; time, 92 min.)

Photographed in Technicolor, this comedy shapes up as an amusing one and one-half hours of slapstick buffoonery that should more than satisfy the Bob Hope enthusiasts. It is nonsensical stuff, but it keeps one laughing throughout, for it is patterned in a manner that does justice to Hope's brand of humor. As a "ham" actor who is mistaken as a British nobleman in the wild and woolly west, Hope romps through his part with his typical gags and quips, becoming involved in numerous misadventures that are compounded into a series of rollicking slapstick situations. There is considerable satirical humor directed at the British aristocracy in the early reels, where Hope, in England, poses as a gentleman's gentleman. A highly laugh-provoking sequence is a fox hunt arranged by Hope for President Theodore Roosevelt. Lucille Ball, as the uninhibited daughter of nouveau riche American parents, adds much to the film's entertainment values. The photography and production values are fine:—

Lucille, touring England with her mother (Lea Penman) in search of a titled husband, attends a weekend party given by an impoverished nobleman who had matrimonial designs on her. There, she and her mother meet Hope, an American actor, who had been hired by the nobleman to pose as a butler to impress Lucille. Hope makes a mess of the assignment, but his finesse so impresses Lucille's mother that she engages him to buttle in her home in a pioneer New Mexico town so as to give social polish to both her uncouth husband (Jack Kirkwood) and ill-mannered daughter. Upon his arrival in New Mexico, Hope is mistaken by the townspeople as an English Lord, and the family, impressed by the envy of their friends, persuade him to masquerade as one. Lucille soon finds herself attracted to Hope, thus incurring the jealous wrath of Bruce Cabot, her quick-shooting boy-friend, who utilizes every opportunity to make life miserable for Hope. President Teddy Roosevelt (played by John Alexander), visiting New Mexico and hearing about Hope, comes to town to see him, and Hope, continuing the masquerade, arranges a fox hunt in his honor, but manages not to participate himself by faking a game leg. Meanwhile Cabot, still gunning for Hope, discovers a scrap book with clippings that reveal Hope as an actor. He exposes him after a hectic chase for possession of the scrap book, and it all ends with Hope fleeing town on a handcar with Lucille at his side.

It was produced by Robert Welch and directed by George Marshall from a screen play by Edmund Hartmann, based on a story by Harry Leon Wilson. The cast includes Eric Blore and others.

Fine for the family.

**"Trial Without Jury" with Kent Taylor,
Audrey Long, Barbra Fuller
and Robert Rockwell**

(Republic, July 8; time, 60 min.)

The story idea is original, but the action, unfortunately, is not convincing as a result of poor dialogue and equally poor direction and acting. For instance, the hero is in love with the sister of the detective investigating the case, yet she persuades him to say nothing to the brother on the ground that he could not have convinced him that he had not committed the crime. In real-life action, this would be

altogether unnatural. From this point on, all the action seems to have been contrived by the author; his characters move at his will, and their actions are not those of normal persons. All in all, the story is synthetic—it couldn't have happened in real life. The pace is slow, and there is no comedy relief:—

Kent Taylor, a successful playwright, writes a psychological murder mystery melodrama, but Theodore Von Eltz, his producer and a philanderer, rejects the play and the two get into a violent argument. On the following morning, Taylor learns that Von Eltz had been found strangled to death in his office. Audrey Long, Taylor's sweetheart, advises him not to say that he had been with Von Eltz on the previous night lest he be accused of the murder. But Audrey's brother, Robert Rockwell, a lieutenant with the Homicide Squad, suspects Taylor. To trap the killer, Taylor decides to write and produce a play, fitting the action to parallel the circumstances surrounding Von Eltz' death. K. Elmo Lowe, backer of Von Eltz' productions, had assembled a cast in anticipation of getting Taylor's psychological mystery story underway, and Taylor receives permission to use both the cast and the staff for the production of his new play. This worked in with his scheme, for Barbra Fuller, the leading lady, John Whitney, the male lead, Stanley Waxman, the director, Barbara Billingsley, Von Eltz' attractive associate, and Ruthelma Stevens, his disillusioned wife, who hated her dead husband because of his philanderings, were suspects. The play is a sell-out since the public had become aware of its purpose. Meanwhile Taylor, under constant threat of death from the murderer himself, uncovers evidence indicating that Miss Fuller had been the killer's accomplice. On opening night, Taylor plays the part of the detective and maneuvers Miss Fuller into admitting her connection with the real-life killer, who turns out to be none other than Lowe. Lowe suddenly confesses that he is Miss Fuller's foster-father, and that he had killed Von Eltz for forcing his attentions on her and refusing to put an end to his efforts. Convinced of Taylor's innocence, Rockwell steps in and arrests Lowe.

The story is by Rose Simon Kohn, the adaptation by Lawrence Goldman, and the screen play by Albert DeMond. Stephen Auer produced it, and Philip Ford directed it.

Harmless for family patronage.

"Death of a Dream"

(Eagle-Lion, July 19; time, 45 min.)

Written and narrated by Quentin Reynolds, this documentary featurette is a compilation of newsreel clips of actual historic events of the last thirty-five years, which Mr. Reynolds uses to sum up the world situation as it exists today and to show that the dream of all free men for peace, democracy and security may turn into a nightmare as a result of Communist aggression. Most of the clips are familiar and have been used in many other documentary-type films. They include, among others, battle scenes of World Wars I and II; President Wilson and the League of Nations; the rise of Hitler and Mussolini; the attack on Ethiopia; the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and the attack on Pearl Harbor; the Nazi march into the Rhineland; Chamberlain at Munich; and the present Communist advance in the Orient. Although familiar, these clips give impact to what Mr. Reynolds has to say as he draws a parallel between the ambitions of Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito and those of Stalin,

and warns that the United Nations, unlike the League of Nations, must be equal to the challenge of aggression. It is an interesting film, one that should do well in the newsreel theatres. Because of its timeliness, regular theatres may be able to exploit it to good advantage as a secondary feature. It is a United World Films production.

"Stella" with Ann Sheridan, Victor Mature and David Wayne

(20th Century-Fox, August; time, 83 min.)

"Stella" is a comedy-farce of questionable taste and doubtful box-office value, mainly because of the macabre quality of its subject matter. The comedy stems chiefly from the farcical doings surrounding the search for a missing man, killed accidentally, whose "screwball" family had hidden his body lest they be accused of murder. Worked into the proceedings for laughs are grave diggings and several decomposed corpses, including a high comedy sequence in an undertaker's parlor during the funeral services for the **wrong remains**. The whole thing is played strictly for laughs, but the different happenings and zany characterizations will, as noted at a New York sneak preview, result in mixed audience reaction; some persons thought it quite funny while others didn't. The story itself is pretty weak and the romantic interest lacks substance. The acting is just fair, and the camera has not been too kind to Ann Sheridan; she appears wan:

Ann is the only working member of a shiftless family, which includes her mother, two sisters, their lazy husbands, and an uncle addicted to drink. All live in a New England resort town, where Ann is employed as secretary to Lief Erickson, an insurance broker, who hoped to marry her. Victor Mature, a representative of a large insurance company, comes into Ann's life when he arrives in town to check on Erickson's qualifications for a job in the home office. While Ann is at work, the family quarrels at a picnic and the uncle is killed accidentally. Agreeing that it might look like murder, the relatives bury the body and, later, lead Ann to believe that he had disappeared on one of his periodic binges. But Ann becomes suspicious and soon draws the truth from them. She favors going to the police, but the family convinces her that the authorities would not accept the truth. While Ann, Mature and Erickson become involved in a romantic triangle, the family discovers that the uncle had been heavily insured by Mature's company, and to collect the money they begin to identify one stray corpse after another as the uncle's body. In every case, however, Mature, meaning to be helpful, disproves the identification. Driven frantic by her family's antics, Ann unburdens herself to Erickson, who in turn uses her confession as a club to make her forget about Mature. In the events that follow, the two brothers-in-law try to exhume the uncle's body so that it would be found elsewhere and enable them to collect the insurance. They are caught red-handed by Mature and the police as they dig up the body of an Indian woman, and the discovery is made that they had inadvertently buried the uncle in an old Indian graveyard. With the truth finally out, the relatives are absolved of responsibility for the uncle's demise and, while Ann and Mature depart to be married, the brothers-in-law keep prospecting for the uncle's body, still hopeful of collecting the insurance.

Claude Binyon directed it and wrote the screen play, based on a novel by Doris Miles Disney. It was produced by Sol C. Siegel. Adult fare.

"STOP" PICTURES

Early this month, Pete J. Wood, erstwhile secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, sent a letter to Abram F. Myers, National Allied's general counsel, asking his advice as to what can be done to eliminate the practice of a distributor refusing to deliver a newly-licensed picture because of the fact that the exhibitor had not yet played off the pictures he had licensed previously from that distributor.

Taking, as an example, the case of MGM, Wood put this query to Myers:

"An exhibitor buys four pictures late and has not furnished any play dates. Then sometime later he signs a contract for 'Annie Get Your Gun,' and he wants to play it 'hot.' When he gives the exchange a date he is informed that they will not accept it unless he dates in the other four pictures *previous* to a date for 'Annie Get Your Gun.'

"The Court has said that the sale of one picture cannot be made contingent upon the sale of another picture, or other pictures. How does this apply to the above situation?"

The following reply by Mr. Myers should be of interest to all exhibitors:

"Replying to yours of the 7th, I do not see how an exhibitor can compel a distributor to deliver a newly-licensed picture until he has played pictures formerly licensed, unless his right to do so is expressly written into the license agreement.

"It is true that the decrees, now effective as to all of the Big Eight, provide that the licensing of one picture shall not be conditioned upon the licensing of another. The provision outlaws the old abuse of compulsory block-booking, or forcing. But it applies only to the licensing of pictures.

"It is my impression that all companies stipulate in their printed contract forms that the pictures shall be played 'in order of general release in the Exchange district.' That established a procedure with respect to the pictures licensed by the particular agreement. But since you refer to the refusal of Metro to deliver 'Annie Get Your Gun' to exhibitors having unplayed pictures under earlier contracts, let's look at the Metro form.

"In addition to the provision above quoted, that form also provides—'It is also agreed that if Exhibitor shall fail or refuse to date, play, or pay the license fees contracted for under any other exhibition contract(s) between the parties hereto . . . Distributor may at its option exercise with respect to this agreement any and all of the rights granted Distributor under Clause Seventeenth hereof . . .'

"Clause Seventeenth provides that in case of such default by Exhibitor—'. . . the Distributor may at its option . . . (2) suspend the delivery of additional motion pictures hereunder until such default or defaults shall cease and be remedied.'

"Unless 'Annie' is licensed under some special form which does not contain the above provisions, or the substance thereof, which seems very unlikely, I see no legal remedy for the condition described in your letter. So-called 'stop' pictures have long been a source of irritation but the distributors have been unwilling to eliminate these contract provisions, although they have in meritorious cases waived their rights thereunder.

"The best and surest remedy is for an exhibitor

having unplayed pictures under contract and desiring a later release for exhibition before he catches up under his contracts, is to have his playdates written into the license agreement. For example, he might insist on writing into his contract for 'Annie' the following:

"Print for this picture shall be delivered not later than July ———, other provisions of the agreement notwithstanding."

"Of course, this offers no comfort to those exhibitors who have bought 'Annie' without alteration of the form. As to them, I think that they, or you in their behalf, should appeal to Metro to make an exception with respect to this picture. Conditions being what they are, it is to the advantage of both the distributor and the exhibitor that 'Annie' be played while it is hot. I have seen the picture and it is wonderful entertainment, just the sort of picture the theatres need right now. Metro and its customers should cash in on it right now, thereby capitalizing on the national advertising campaign. With the summer slump added to our present difficulties, a little later may be too late to realize on the full potentiality of this picture.

"Incidentally, 'Father of the Bride' is going great guns in these parts and if your members want it for early exhibition, advise them to insist on adding the clause herein recommended."

THE NEW UNITED ARTISTS SETUP

As most of you undoubtedly know by this time, a group of investors, headed by Paul V. McNutt, former Governor of Indiana, who served also as high commissioner of the Philippines and as manpower commissioner during the last war, has acquired control of United Artists from Mary Pickford and Charles Chaplin.

The sale came as a complete surprise to the industry, for up to the time of the announcement there had been no indication that Mr. McNutt had been negotiating with Miss Pickford and Chaplin. At a trade press interview in New York this week, Mr. McNutt, other than admitting that he holds 90% of the outstanding stock as trustee, with Miss Pickford and Chaplin retaining 10%, refused to divulge the identity of the principals he represents, thus hanging a veil of mystery over the entire deal.

Under the new setup, Mr. McNutt will act as chairman of the board, and Frank L. McNamee, an old associate of McNutt's and a present partner with Jay Emanuel, publisher of *The Exhibitor*, in several theatres, replaces Grad Sears as president. Miss Pickford replaces Arthur W. Kelly as executive vice-president. No decision has been reached as to the future status of Sears, whose contract with UA reportedly runs until the end of 1951.

While the undisclosed details of the deal would be interesting from the "newsy" point of view, they do not mean much to the exhibitor, for he still is faced with demands for top rentals no matter who heads a film company.

United Artists has been in difficulties for a long time, and the general run of product from the company has not been of the best entertainment quality. It is to be hoped that the new owners will revitalize the company and deliver better pictures to the benefit of themselves as well as the exhibitors.

HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes Mr. McNutt and his mysterious backers success.

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A DEPLORABLE STATE OF AFFAIRS

With the Government moving swiftly to organize the nation for all-out mobilization to meet the present crisis, it was to be expected that the different elements of the motion picture industry would come forward with offers of cooperation, as they have always done whenever a national cause was to be served. It is dismaying, however, to see representatives of the different industry groups rushing to Washington to present cooperation programs of their own without first making an effort to coordinate their thinking with that of the other industry groups so that a unified industry liaison may be set up between the Government agencies and the motion picture industry as a whole.

First to rush to Washington was Francis S. Harmon, vice-president of the Motion Picture Association of America, who had been named by Eric Johnston, MPAA president, to act as liaison between the Government and the producer-distributor members of the association. Mr. Harmon was executive vice-president and coordinator of the War Activities Committee during World War II.

Close on Mr. Harmon's heels was a group of top officials of the Theatre Owners of America who, according to trade paper reports, met with Government officials early this week to present a program of theatre cooperation.

Obviously motivated by the appointment of Harmon and by the maneuvers of the TOA officials, Trueman T. Rembusch, president of National Allied, issued the following statement last weekend:

"I feel strongly that the motion picture industry's war activities should be carried on through COMPO, which is the only all-industry organization including in its membership the different elements and factions in production, distribution and exhibition. Pending the assumption by COMPO of its proper duties and functions in connection with the war effort, I have asked our general counsel Abram F. Myers to serve as liaison with the several Government departments and agencies in all matters affecting Allied members. Allied cannot consent to being represented in matters of such grave importance by volunteers or others in the selection of whom Allied has no voice. I personally hope that the situation in regard to COMPO will be clarified and that it will become a going concern before Allied's October meeting when under a resolution adopted in Minneapolis last November the entire subject of Allied's membership in COMPO will be reviewed."

Mr. Rembusch then sent the following telegram to President Truman, Secretary of State Dean Acheson,

Secretary of the Treasury John W. Synder, Secretary of National Defense Louis B. Johnson and W. Stuart Symington, chairman of the National Security Resources Board:

"Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors representing independent motion picture owners is planning full cooperation with Government in war emergency through Council of Motion Picture Organizations which includes in its membership all elements in the motion picture industry. Meantime I have designated our general counsel, Abram F. Myers, 1131 Dupont Circle, Washington, D. C., to represent the 7000 independent theatres in Allied States Association in all matters involving participation by such theatres in the war effort. In the interest of complete teamwork we feel we should warn you against opportunists and publicity seekers pretending to speak for the motion picture industry. As soon as Council of Motion Picture Organizations assumes its responsibility in this matter, probably on July 25, you will be assured of a point of contact with the industry involving all branches."

National Allied's stand undoubtedly stirred Ned E. Depinet, COMPO's president, into immediate action, for he called a special meeting of COMPO's executive board on Friday, July 21, to meet in New York on Monday, July 24, to discuss primarily the use of the all-industry organization as the exclusive channel for cooperation with the Government in the present emergency, as recommended by COMPO's Committee on Organization, of which Harry Brandt is chairman.

Of the ten member organizations that make up COMPO, four were not represented at the meeting, including the Motion Picture Industry Council, Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners, Variety, International and the TOA. The absence of representatives of the first three organizations is understandable because of the limited time in which they had to travel a great distance, but TOA's failure to attend may or may not be significant.

At any rate, a decision on the deliberations will not be reached until the absent member groups will have had a chance to register their approval or rejection.

HARRISON'S REPORTS is in complete accord with the stand taken by National Allied in calling upon COMPO to assume the responsibility of dealing with the different Government agencies in all matters that affect the industry as a whole. COMPO was launched as an all-industry organization. It gives evenly-balanced representation to all groups and factions and, under its by-laws, no step may be made by the organi-

(Continued on last page)

"Beaver Valley"

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 32 min.)

Excellent! Photographed in Technicolor and filmed with the cooperation of the Montana Fish and Game Department, it is a fascinating and delightful Walt Disney "True Life" featurette that depicts a group of birds and animals in their natural habitat—the region of a beaver pond. Completely authentic, unstaged and unrehearsed, the film's depiction of wild animals and birds going about their business of courtships, home-making and survival has been captured by the cameras in a way that is nothing short of remarkable. It is a grand entertainment in every sense of the word, for Disney has cleverly gotten away from the routine nature film by presenting the activities of the animals with a story-like continuity, giving it elements of comedy, romance, suspense and excitement that will have undeniable appeal for all types of movie-goers, young or old. It should make a perfect second feature in double-billing theatres, and can be used to fine advantage in rounding out a program in single-billing houses.

Covering the four seasons in the year, the film portrays the beaver as the "leading citizen" of the woodland community and depicts in fine detail the manner in which he builds a dam, raises a family, prepares food for the winter and protects his loved ones from intruders and enemies. The camera also takes in the activities of moose, deer, bear, coyote, otter, badger, racoon, eagle, owl, duck, salmon, trout, frog and many other birds and beasts. There are any number of unusual shots, such as a moose feeding with its head under water, and a bear catching huge salmon in mid-stream. And there is much comedy, too. For example, the scenes that show a harried merganser mother teaching her young to fly, and the sequences that deal with the mischievous behaviour of the fresh-water otter, sleek swimmers, as they tease the slower beavers and slide on snow and ice, are extremely comical. The most outstanding and funniest sequence is the "Frog Symphony," in which a chorus of assorted frogs croak in rhythm with an operatic aria. The narration, background music, editing and photography are of the highest quality. The film will, in all probability, receive an Academy Award.

"Convicted" with Glenn Ford, Broderick Crawford and Millard Mitchell

(Columbia, August; time, 91 min.)

A fair prison melodrama that rises slightly above the level of program fare by virtue of its star value. It is a remake of "The Criminal Code," produced by Columbia in 1931. The effective acting of Glenn Ford, as the young man who is sent to prison for the accidental killing of a politician's son, and of Broderick Crawford, as the sympathetic District Attorney who becomes the prison warden, holds one's interest, but there are times when the story drags and becomes boring. The fault seems to lie in the incredible plot, which is written loosely and padded considerably. The picture should, however, get by with undiscriminating audiences, for it has several exciting moments and a number of dramatic situations:—

Ford, employed in a brokerage house, finds himself charged with second degree murder when a barroom brawl with the drunken son of a politician results in the young man's accidental death. Crawford, the District Attorney, feels sympathy for Ford and tries to advise his attorney on how to defend him, but the attorney bungles the case and Ford is sentenced to ten

years in prison. After serving two years, Ford is denied a parole when the Board learns the name of his victim. Embittered, he plans to escape with several cellmates, but on the day of the break he receives word of his father's death and is put into solitary for striking a guard. Meanwhile his cellmates attempt the break and are mowed down by the guards as the result of their betrayal by Frank Faylen, a stool pigeon. Crawford comes to the prison as the new warden and immediately arranges for Ford to become his chauffeur. Ford falls in love with Dorothy Malone, Crawford's daughter, who does her best to condition him to his imminent return to civilian life. In the events that follow, Crawford becomes aware of a strong feeling among the convicts against Faylen, and he keeps the stool pigeon on his staff to protect him. On the eve of his parole, Ford witnesses the murder of Faylen by Millard Mitchell, a fellow convict. Crawford, aware that Ford was the only witness to the crime, demands to know the name of the killer, but Ford, true to the criminal code, refuses to squeal and is thrown into solitary confinement. There, he is tortured secretly by Carl Benton Reid, the sadistic captain of the prison guards, whom Mitchell hated. Learning that fellow convicts had smuggled a knife to Ford's cell, and fearing that Ford will kill Reid and get life, Mitchell obtains a gun, creates a riot, and has himself thrown into solitary with Ford. Once there, he gets hold of the knife, confesses Faylen's murder and kills Reid before being killed himself. It ends with Ford gaining his freedom and with Crawford approving his marriage to Dorothy.

It was produced by Jerry Bressler and directed by Henry Levin from a screen play by William Bowers, Fred Niblo, Jr., and Seton I. Miller, based upon a play by Martin Flavin. Adult fare.

"Snow Dog" with Kirby Grant, Elena Verdugo and Rick Vallin

(Monogram, July 16; time, 63 min.)

A very good program melodrama of the Canadian woods, with a Mounted Police officer as the chief character. The action holds one in tense suspense from the beginning to the end. Although the direction is skillful, as a result of which the players act with realism, a great deal of the credit should go to Bill Raynor, the screenplay writer, even though this work is his first. There are many tensely melodramatic situations throughout the picture, and the outdoor scenery adds to the spectator's pleasure. Chinook, the dog, wins much sympathy. The villainous characters impress one as being real villains and not Hollywood-made. The photography is a treat to the eye:—

Killings without robbery puzzle Kirby Grant, a Canadian mountie, but, when Chinook, his dog, tears a dog collar from a wolf he meets in the woods, Grant suspects that a human agency is responsible for the killings. Still puzzled for a motive, however, Grant dons civilian clothes to track the killer. He decides to enlist the aid of Elena Verdugo, whose uncle had been the first victim, and arrives at her cabin just as Rick Vallin, her brother, returns from a trapping trip, where he had been attacked by a wolf that bore a likeness to Chinook. Noticing Chinook, Vallin raises his gun to shoot him, but Grant convinces him that the animal was not the killer. Grant learns from Elena that her uncle had left a map indicating the location of a fortune in pitchblende deposits. Hal Gerard and Richard Avonde, two ruffians who had overheard Elena's statement about the map, steal it. Val-

lin, who had seen the map, draws another one from memory for Grant, who heads for a distant trading post to check the information. En route, he is ambushed and wounded by Gerard, but manages to reach town, where his wounds are treated by Milburn Stone, a doctor. Richard Karlan, head of the gang seeking to locate the pitchblende, kills Gerard for his failure to dispose of Grant, and makes it appear as if Chinook had committed the killing. With Grant away, Vallin tries to save Chinook from the gang by hunting down the wolf. He is captured by the gang and tortured in an effort to make him disclose the spot described on the map. In a further effort to make him talk, Elena is abducted by the gang. Grant, learning of the abduction from Stone, sets out with Chinook, locates the villains and, at gunpoint, forces them to release both Elena and Vallin. The doctor, a secret member of the gang, orders Grant to put up his hands. At that moment, however, Chinook leaps on the doctor and a fight ensues, culminating in the capture of all the villains. As Grant leaves for headquarters with his prisoners, he promises to return to marry Elena.

The screenplay was based on the novel, "Tentacles of the North," by James Oliver Curwood. It was produced by Lindsley Parsons and directed by Frank McDonald. Fine for family audiences.

"Eye Witness" with Robert Montgomery
(Eagle-Lion, August; time, 104 min.)

Made in England, this murder trial melodrama is hampered by an overlong, rambling story that could stand some judicious cutting. On the whole, however, it is a fairly engrossing entertainment of its kind, mainly because of the interesting characterizations. As a glib New York attorney who goes to England to defend a wartime buddy on a murder charge, Robert Montgomery functions as both star and director and does a competent job in both categories, except for the fact that he has kept the pace a bit too slow. The picture is at its best in the sly but good-natured humor poked at British customs and legal traditions as seen through the eyes of an American. The brash tactics employed by Montgomery in the courtroom, and the exchanges between him and Felix Aylmer, the patient judge, are delightfully comical:—

Montgomery, a successful New York lawyer, flies to England when he learns that Michael Ripper, a former British soldier who had saved his life on the battlefield, is in trouble with the law. Arriving in a small English village on a Sunday morning, he learns, after much difficulty with the slow-moving authorities, that Ripper was accused of murdering his partner in a livery stable because he suspected the man of making improper advances to his wife (Jenny Laird). Ripper claimed that he had shot the man in self-defense, and that an unknown woman who had been in the victim's bedroom could clear him if she would come forward and testify. Montgomery sets out to find the mysterious woman and is aided in his search by Patricia Wayne, widowed sister-in-law of Leslie Banks, high sheriff of the county. Their search is unavailing by the time Ripper is put on trial, but Montgomery doggedly continues his investigation and reluctantly finds reason to suspect that Patricia herself was the mysterious woman. By a stroke of luck, however, he discovers that the missing witness is none other than Ann Stephen, the high sheriff's young daughter, who denies the accusation. Through her father, Montgomery arranges for Ann to take the

witness stand and, under his clever cross-examination, she breaks down and clears Ripper. His task with Ripper completed, Montgomery shrewdly brings about a better understanding between Ann and her father, and at the same time wins Patricia's love.

It was produced by Joan Harrison and directed by Mr. Montgomery from a screen play by Ian Hunter and Hugo Butler. Adult fare.

"Pretty Baby" with Dennis Morgan, Betsy Drake and Zachary Scott
(Warner Bros., Sept. 16; time, 92 min.)

Although the story is thin and far-fetched to the point of ridiculousness, "Pretty Baby" is an entertaining comedy-farce. Revolving around the "wacky" mixups a young secretary gets herself into as a result of using a life-size doll to get a seat in a crowded subway train, the plot is full of convenient coincidences and unlikely situations, but it moves along at a breezy pace and should amuse those who relish broad fun. Most of the comedy stems from the mistaken belief of a wealthy tycoon that the unwed heroine has a real baby, and from the pressure he puts on her bosses to make her happy. As said, it is nonsensical stuff, but it is light and affable, and permits one to relax:—

Betsy Drake, a stenographer, is employed by an advertising agency operated by Dennis Morgan and Zachary Scott, whose chief client is Edmund Gwenn, an irascible baby food tycoon, without whose business they could not exist. To solve the problem of getting a seat in the subway each day, Betsy wraps a blanket around a life-size doll to appear like a mother and infant. Gwenn, compelled to ride in the subway when his chauffeur quits, overhears Betsy tell a woman passenger that her "baby" was named after him. Interested, he makes her acquaintance by identifying himself as a watchman in the food company he owned, and learns that she worked for Morgan and Scott. Gwenn summons the pair, tells them about Betsy and her "baby," and insists that they make her happy in her work. They hurriedly agree, although neither one knew that she was in their employ. Returning to the office, they learn that the office manager had fired Betsy for incompetence, but they find her and rehire her with a big raise in pay, and immediately set in motion a plan to use her to sell Gwenn on a new advertising campaign. With Morgan and Scott believing that Betsy is Gwenn's "girl-friend," and with Betsy believing that she had been rehired because of her ability, all concerned become involved in a series of misunderstandings, with matters becoming even more complicated when Betsy discovers Gwenn's real identity and he in turn learns that she is not married and finds reason to suspect that Scott is the "father" of her "child." Betsy wants to tell Gwenn the truth, but Morgan stops her by telling her that she will be responsible for putting several hundred people out of work. To make matters worse, Morgan, by this time in love with Betsy, is compelled to watch Scott date her in order to keep Gwenn happy. More confusion results when Betsy, no longer wishing to fool Gwenn, disappears. Gwenn hires a detective to find her and, after much excitement, learns her whereabouts as well as the truth. It all ends with Morgan and Betsy heading for the marriage license bureau.

It was produced by Harry Kurnitz and directed by Brethaigne Windust from a screen play by Everett Freeman and Mr. Kurnitz, based on a story by Jules Furthman and John Klorer.

Unobjectionable morally.

zation without the unanimous approval of all the groups and factions represented. Consequently, no action can be taken that will give one group an advantage at the expense of another. Under this set-up, COMPO is the ideal agency through which a unified industry liaison with the Government can be established. It seems strange, therefore, that, after all the effort that has been put into unifying the industry through COMPO, two member organizations, namely MPAA and TOA, should branch out on their own to deal with the Government on matters that vitally affect the interests of all. Thoughtless acts such as these breed a lack of confidence in the intentions of MPAA and TOA in regard to COMPO's future.

Up to this point, though the going has been slow, COMPO has offered the first tangible evidence of the possibility of getting the different elements of the industry to work together for the common good. The excellent admission tax campaign carried on through COMPO's Committee on Taxation and Legislation is proof of what can be done with a united front. HARRISON'S REPORTS has supported the COMPO unity movement from its inception and it still hopes that the movement can be rescued from the misunderstanding and distrust into which it has fallen. It is up to the leaders of the MPAA and of the TOA to see to it that confidence in COMPO is reestablished, for, if the movement fails and the industry enters into the dark years ahead torn by internal dissension, the lack of a unified front may bring about crippling Government regulations that will work a hardship on the business without in any way helping the war effort. And without a unified front it will be difficult to induce the Government to modify such rulings.

IT MUST NOT HAPPEN AGAIN

Even if the Korean conflict should end suddenly with the American troops, of course, emerging victorious, the present crisis will continue for a long time because of the threat of Communist aggression in other parts of the world. Elder statesman Bernard Baruch told a Congressional committee this week that the next five years will be a critical period in the nation's effort to build up and maintain our military strength on a par with Soviet Russia.

In the months ahead, therefore, our industry must anticipate Government rulings and regulations that will have a direct effect on all branches of the industry. Just how drastic these may be cannot be foretold, but if we will think back to the war years we will remember the "brownout," which limited the use of exterior lighting to save power; the advocacy of the closing of theatres whenever a fuel shortage threatened; the denial of Freon gas to the theatres; the shortage and allocation of raw film stock; the doubling of the Federal tax on admissions; the limit placed on the amount of money the producers could spend for new materials to build new sets; and numerous other rules and regulations that hampered the industry's operations but which had to be overcome because of the sacrifices demanded by the war.

While most of the rules and regulations governing the allocation of strategic materials were a hindrance, there was one—the allocation of raw film stock—that proved to be a bonanza for the producer-distributors

at the expense of the exhibitors, who woke up to the danger too late for their protests to do them any good.

During the war years, the War Production Board allocated to the industry a share of the raw film stock produced in this country, with each of the eleven producing-distributing companies receiving a certain number of million feet. There were no restrictions placed on the use of this raw stock; each company was left to work out its own problems regarding the number of feet needed for production and the number of feet required for release prints.

Unhampered by regulatory restrictions, the producer-distributors began to juggle their raw stock allocations in a manner that perpetuated a "seller's market." By releasing fewer pictures and giving them extended playing time in the key-runs, and by controlling the number of prints in circulation, they were able to tighten their control of the film market and even used the print shortage to increase the clearance enjoyed by their affiliated theatres, as well as to exact exorbitant rentals and preferred playing time from the independents.

The situation became so acute that many exhibitors turned to spot bookings of reissues for relief. But this avenue of escape was soon closed to them when the distributors, realizing that reissues offered a lucrative profit because of the artificial product shortage maintained by their tactics, began to reissue old pictures on a national basis, using thousands of feet of rationed film stock for new prints, and demanding rental terms that were not only excessive but in many instances even higher than the terms demanded when the pictures were new. It was, in other words, the old "squeeze play." Meanwhile the companies accumulated large backlogs of pictures, hoarding them in their vaults and marking time while the reissues made their rounds.

Another abuse was the use by the distributors of rationed film stock to further their interests in foreign markets while the American exhibitors were "starved" for pictures.

The abuses suffered by the exhibitors in the war days stemmed to a great extent from the failure of the WPB to regulate the distributors' use of raw stock, despite the fact that the exhibitors, as much as the producer-distributors, had an undeniable stake in every foot of film allocated to the industry.

Having carried on a vigorous campaign during the war years for a revision by the WPB of its method of film stock allocations so that recognition would be given to the exhibitors' equity in the stock, HARRISON'S REPORTS can cite any number of specific moral violations committed by the producer-distributors in their misuse of the film stock. The purpose of this article, however, is not to dwell on past abuses but to alert the exhibitors to the fact that exhibition, through its leaders, must have a voice in all conferences held by Government officials with motion picture industry representatives in connection with the war effort, whether it be for the rationing of raw film stock or the placing of restrictions on other commodities as well as manpower used in the functions of the business. Only by being given full recognition and representation in all such conferences will the exhibitors be protected fully in matters that are vital to their business existence in accordance with war-time exigencies.

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THE IMPENDING CYCLE OF WAR PICTURES

With the advent of the Korean war, and with the nation gearing itself for all-out mobilization, the producers in Hollywood, according to reports, are scurrying around for story material that will fit in with the current headlines. In some instances scripts are being revised to include timely sequences, and in other instances original stories dealing directly with the Korean conflict are being typed out hurriedly by the studios' writers in order that they may be put before the cameras at the earliest possible date.

As evidence of the producers' current thinking, a great number of picture titles slanted to capitalize on the Korean war has been filed in recent weeks with the title registration bureau of the MPAA.

From the hurried preparations that are now going on in Hollywood, an impending cycle of pictures dealing with timely war subjects is in the offing. Before rushing through with their plans, however, the producers would do well to give the matter deep consideration, for no one knows better than the exhibitors just how seriously the box-office was hit during the last war because the movie-goers had become apathetic towards war pictures, of which they had been fed an overdose. The movie-going public had become so satiated with pictures that used the war as a background that even the meritorious ones suffered at the box-office.

No one will deny the necessity of timely war pictures that will, in terms of entertainment, clarify the issues for which we are fighting, but there can be no question that an overdose of war-themed pictures, no matter how good and meaningful some of them may be, tires the movie-goer.

* * *

While on the subject of the impending cycle of war-themed pictures, a word of caution to the producers on the importance of considering the public's state of mind will not be amiss.

It is understandable and even desirable that war melodramas should be grim, for they serve to reflect to the civilians at home that war is a tough, dirty business that demands the greatest sacrifices from each one of us to bring it to a speedy and successful conclusion. Battle scenes, for example, add a realistic touch to war pictures and give them the desired dramatic and inspirational effect. Audiences expect to see this type of action in such pictures, and they find these scenes acceptable, though brutal.

But there is one sort of realism that war pictures can do without—scenes that depict in minute detail the mental and physical sufferings of a fighting man. Surgical operations; the loss of limbs; shell-shock; a fighting man returning home to his loved ones either blinded or with some other injury received from performing an heroic act, are scenes that may be highly dramatic and may even bring tears to one's eyes, but they can hardly be classified as entertainment for parents, wives, sweethearts and relatives of men who are either in the armed forces or subject to the draft. In the days ahead most picture-goers will look upon the fighting man on the screen as representative of the one they love, and scenes that depict him undergoing excruciating mental

and physical pain are sights that will torture their hearts out of fear that their loved ones will suffer a similar fate.

The Korean war and the tense international situation are causing great mental stress to many people, and our motion pictures should not add to this strain unnecessarily. Since the motion picture, as a matter of fact, has no equal as a source of entertainment for the masses, the producers must recognize that their responsibility in the selection of story material for war-themed pictures is greater than ever, for their judgment will determine whether or not the movie-goer is to receive the relaxation he or she seeks and needs. When every day fills the lives of millions with intense emotional stress, they need entertainment that will give them a lift. But if they leave the theatres in an unhappy frame of mind, caused by heart-rending scenes that parallel their own grief, it will help neither their morale nor theatre attendance.

BILL RODGERS OFFERS HIS COOPERATION

Under the heading "STOP PICTURES," this paper published in its July 22 issue an opinion by Abram F. Myers, National Allied's general counsel, on what can be done to eliminate the practice of a distributor refusing to deliver a newly-licensed picture to an exhibitor unless he has first played off the pictures he had licensed previously from that distributor. Mr. Myers' opinion was in reply to a query from Pete Wood, secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, who took, as an example, the case of MGM's "Annie Get Your Gun."

William F. Rodgers, MGM's general sales manager, had this to say on the subject in a recent letter to Mr. Myers:

"My attention has been called to your statement of opinion regarding exhibitors who want 'Annie Get Your Gun,' but who are delinquent in dating other pictures previously bought.

"We are most appreciative of what you had to say about 'Annie Get Your Gun' and 'Father of the Bride' as well as the very clear and fair manner in which you answered the question.

"Let me assure you that if there are any deserving cases, because of recent purchases of a number of pictures, or due to conditions beyond their control, where any theatre owners would be unreasonably held up on the playing of these outstanding attractions, if these details will be given to our local Branch Manager and are meritorious I will authorize the dating of either or both pictures out of continuity of release for I agree with you that there should be as little delay as possible in getting these pictures before the public as further proof that 'Movies Are Better Than Ever.'

"Just as it is right and proper for us to deliver our pictures to our customers in order of release, so we feel it is only fair that they be played in a like manner unless, as I have stated above, there are mitigating circumstances in which case we, of course, want to fully cooperate."

That Bill Rodgers has offered his full cooperation in this matter does not come as a surprise to HARRISON'S REPORTS, nor will it startle most of the exhibitors, for he has always made a sincere effort to recognize the exhibitors' problems and to do something about them.

"The Desert Hawk" with Yvonne De Carlo and Richard Greene

(Univ.-Int'l, August; time, 78 min.)

A good picture of its type. Photographed in Technicolor, it is one of those fantastic Arabian Nights tales, offering a mixture of adventure, romance and comedy that should please the youngsters as well as the adult action fans, for the story is wildly melodramatic, with plentiful swordplay and chases. The lavish palace settings, the desert and ancient Bagdad backgrounds, the brilliant-hued costumes, all enhanced by the color photography, give the film a pageantry-like quality! And Yvonne De Carlo, as a princess, together with her handmaidens and a bevy of harem girls, all in fetching costumes, are easy on the eyes. Richard Greene, as a "Robin Hood" type of character, cuts a dashing and heroic figure. The direction is good and the acting is in the bombastic style demanded by this type of story:—

George Macready, a wicked prince who oppressed the people of the desert, is constantly opposed by Richard Greene, a blacksmith who, as the Desert Hawk defended the people and rode forth with his masked band to harass Macready's forces. To rid himself of the Desert Hawk, Macready seeks the help of the Caliph of Bagdad and arranges to marry Yvonne De Carlo, his daughter. Learning that Yvonne awaited the arrival of her bridegroom, whom she had never met, in an oasis, Greene rides in, impersonates Macready, and marries her before disappearing on the following morning upon the arrival of Macready. Yvonne, discovering that she had been tricked, demands that Macready bring Greene's head to her on a platter. Macready then makes a deal with Carl Esmond, another powerful ruler, to murder Yvonne and make it appear as if Greene is responsible. Marc Lawrence, Esmond's aide, disguises himself as the Desert Hawk and swoops down on the oasis, but instead of killing Yvonne he takes her prisoner along with her handmaidens. Now aware that there was a plot against her life, Yvonne switches clothes with one of her handmaidens and soon finds herself sold as a slave in the open market. She is recognized by Greene, who buys her. Meanwhile Esmond discovers that the handmaiden he held prisoner is not Yvonne, and Macready learns that Esmond had failed him. These circumstances set in motion a wild series of events in which Yvonne is kidnapped from Greene by Esmond, and in which all concerned, including Macready, end up in Esmond's palace. There, after a furious fight in which both Esmond and Macready are killed, Greene rescues Yvonne and wins the blessing of the Caliph as his new son-in-law.

It was produced by Leonard Goldstein and directed by Frederick de Cordova, from an original screen play by Aubrey Wisberg, Jack Pollexfen and Gerald Drayson Adams. The cast includes Jackie Gleason, Joe Besser and others. Harmless for the family.

"Hi-Jacked" with Jim Davis and Marsha Jones

(Lippert, July 7; time, 65 min.)

A surprisingly well produced "B" melodrama. One is held in fairly tense suspense throughout, for the hero is sympathetic and one fears lest he be punished for crimes he had not committed. The theme, as indicated by the title, is hi-jacking. The hero is hi-jacked twice and, because he is a parolee, he is naturally suspected of being in league with the crooks. The methods he employs to track down the hi-jackers and thus prove his innocence are logical, and, because of good direction, they are made believable. The romantic interest is fairly pleasant:—

Jim Davis, an interstate truck driver, is tricked one evening by crooks, who beat him up and hi-jack his truck. He reports the robbery to Ralph Sanford, the company's dispatcher, but because of his prison record he is suspected of being implicated in the crime. Actually, Sanford himself is in league with the crooks, passing information to them about valuable cargoes. Dispatched on another run with orders to return with a liquor shipment, Davis stops in the town of Gorman, where one of the crooks starts a fight with him while the other pours a drug into his thermos bottle of coffee. Later, he sips the coffee, becomes drowsy and is forced to

stop the truck. Just before he slips into unconsciousness, he hears the voice of the ringleader ordering the crooks to take the truck to their warehouse. Davis is again accused of complicity in the crime when he reports the second robbery. He quits his job, determined to hunt and find the "voice," claiming that he will recognize it anywhere. Sanford is present when he makes that statement. When Davis is attacked later by thugs and told to forget the "voice," he realizes that Sanford is the only logical person who might have informed his attackers. He overhears the crooks planning to hi-jack another truck and conceals himself in the truck's compartment beneath the floor to witness the crime. When the truck arrives at the warehouse, Davis slips out and quietly telephones the police. The crooks discover him and attempt to kill him, but he manages to get hold of a gun and shoots it out with them, killing two of the crooks by the time the police arrive. With Sanford and the gang apprehended, Davis, now exonerated, is promoted to general manager, and he returns home to Marsha Jones, his wife, a happy man.

It was produced by Sigmund Neufeld and directed by Sam Newfield from a screen play by Orville Hampton and Fred Myton, who collaborated on the original story with Ray Shrock.

Ed. Note: The picture advertises Miller's High Life beer, Hoffman Radios, and the Gorman Restaurant in Gorman, Calif. Suitable for the family.

"Summer Stock" with Judy Garland, Gene Kelly, Eddie Bracken and Gloria De Haven

(MGM, August; time, 109 min.)

An excellent Technicolor musical comedy-drama, one that should do extremely well at the box-office, not only because of the drawing power of the stars, but also because of the favorable word-of-mouth advertising it is sure to receive. Revolving around the activities of a summer stock company, and around their invasion of a farm owned by Judy Garland, the story is lightweight, but it is refreshing and consistently entertaining, for it has been endowed with good comedy situations and an appealing romance. Moreover, the musical sequences are intimate and attractive, and the songs melodious. Judy Garland is exceptionally good in this picture, the best she has been in a long time; her singing and dancing drew rousing cheers from a preview audience after the finish of each of her numbers. Gene Kelly's dance routines are nothing short of superb. One musical number that will literally bring down the house is a comedy hill-billy song-and-dance routine in which Kelly and Phil Silvers are joined by a pack of barking dogs. Eddie Bracken, as a mousey suitor domineered by his father, adds much to the comedy:—

Judy, an impoverished farm owner in Connecticut, awaits the arrival of Gloria De Haven, her sister, to help gather in the crops. She becomes furious when Gloria, an aspiring actress, arrives with a summer stock company headed by Gene Kelly, Gloria's boy-friend, to put on a show in the farm barn. Learning that Kelly and his group had invested all their money to stage the show, Judy agrees to let them remain provided they help Marjorie Main, her housekeeper, with the chores. The presence of actors on Judy's farm disturbs Eddie Bracken, her local boy-friend, as well as Ray Collins, his father, owner of the general store. Judy and Kelly are attracted to each other, but she keeps away from him out of deference to Gloria. Complications arise several days before the opening when Gloria quarrels with Kelly and returns to New York. Desperate for a leading lady, Kelly calls upon Judy to step in and do the part. She agrees, despite the objections of Bracken, who hurries to New York to bring back Gloria. Judy and Kelly realize their love during the next few days of intense rehearsing. Gloria and Bracken return on opening night, but Gloria refuses to interfere when she sees that Judy and Kelly are really in love. The show turns out to be a hit, and it all ends on a happy note with the start of a romance between Gloria and Bracken.

It was produced by Joe Pasternak and directed by Charles Walters from a story by Sy Gombert, who wrote the screen play with George Wells. Fine for the family.

"Edge of Doom" with Dana Andrews, Farley Granger and Joan Evans

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 99 min.)

Ninety-nine minutes of unrelieved gloom are served up in this tragic tale about a morose, grief-stricken young man who kills an elderly Catholic priest for refusing to give his mother an elaborate funeral. It is a morbid, depressing story, set against a bleak background of tenement squalor and poverty, and its box-office possibilities are questionable, for it is doubtful if movie-goers nowadays are in the mood for this type of grim entertainment. Moreover, the story itself lacks an appreciable dramatic punch, mainly because of the fact that the characterizations are somewhat vague and the plot sketchily developed. Extraneous incidents are introduced without any of them having a direct bearing on the story. The acting is fairly good, with Farley Granger turning in a sensitive performance as the neurotic young murderer, and with Dana Andrews sympathetic as an understanding priest who influences the boy to give himself up to the police. Although Joan Evans is given star billing, her part is extremely brief, consuming perhaps not much more than one or two minutes of screen time:—

When his mother, a deeply religious woman, dies of tuberculosis, Granger, penniless and friendless, becomes obsessed with a desire to give her an elaborate funeral to make up for the poverty in her life. He appeals to Harold Vermilyea, the district's elderly parish priest, towards whom Granger felt bitter because he had denied his father, a suicide, burial in consecrated ground. When the aged priest treats Granger's unreasonable demands coldly, the lad, enraged, hits him on the head with a metal crucifix, killing him. He covers up all evidence of the crime and flees from the rectory. As he walks the streets aimlessly, he finds himself caught up in a crowd attracted to a theatre robbery. He becomes panic-stricken, and two detectives, noticing his erratic behavior, accuse him of the robbery and take him to headquarters for questioning. There he is recognized by Andrews, the murdered priest's assistant, who gains his release by assuring the police that the lad's odd actions were due to the death of his mother. Meanwhile the priest's body is found and a hunt is started for the killer. In the complicated events that follow, while Granger tries unsuccessfully to arrange an elaborate funeral for his mother, Andrews finds a clue indicating that the lad had murdered Vermilyea. In the meantime Paul Stewart, a petty thief known to Granger, is erroneously accused and identified as the killer. Andrews confronts Granger with the clue and, when the young man denies the crime, he tells him gently to examine his conscience. In a final scene at the mortuary chapel, Granger, standing beside his mother's casket, sobs out his confession to her while Andrews and the police stand unobserved in the doorway.

It was produced by Samuel Goldwyn and directed by Mark Robson from a screen play by Philip Yordan, based on the novel by Leo Brady.

Adult fare.

"Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye" with James Cagney and Barbara Payton

(Warner Bros., Aug. 19; time, 102 min.)

This crime melodrama is so unpleasant, vicious and demoralizing that it can hardly be classified as entertainment. It should, however, satisfy those who enjoy seeing James Cagney in his familiar role of a cocky, sadistic gangster, one who shoots down people without compunction, slaps his women and throws them around, and in general displays maniacal tendencies as he goes about the business of achieving his crooked ends. The story is made up of ugly situations from start to finish, and there is not one character for whom the spectator can feel any sympathy. Even the police are shown as being crooked. The plot itself is weak, for much of it is illogical. Cagney's portrayal of the homicidal gangster is, at times, so lacking in restraint that it borders on the burlesque:—

Cagney, an inmate at a prison farm, plans an escape with another prisoner, whose sister (Barbara Payton) had arranged for a getaway car. To make good his own escape, Cagney shoots down Barbara's brother on the way out. Arriving in the big city, Cagney learns from Steve Brodie, driver of the getaway car, that Barbara owed \$1000 to Rhys Williams, a crooked garage owner, for furnishing the car. Together with Brodie, he stages a quick holdup of a supermarket to get ready cash and to pay Williams the \$1000. By this time Barbara, after some rough handling by Cagney, had become his mistress. That night Cagney is visited by Ward Bond and Barton MacLane, two crooked detectives

who, tipped off by Williams, take away the balance of the holdup money. On the following day, Cagney lures the crooked detectives back to his home and proposes that they cooperate with him on a big payroll robbery. He secretly records their verbal agreement to the deal and, with the aid of Luther Adler, a shady lawyer, uses the recording to blackmail them into agreeing to protect his criminal activities. With Bond and MacLane under his thumb, Cagney has little difficulty staging one holdup after another, killing his victims whenever it suited his purpose. He meets and becomes attracted to Helena Carter, daughter of Herbert Heyes, a powerful steel tycoon, and marries her secretly. Heyes learns of the marriage and demands an annulment. Cagney agrees without argument, and even signs a paper renouncing all claims to Helena's fortune. Impressed by Cagney's fairness but still unaware of his activities, Heyes asks him to resume the marriage, revealing that it had not been annulled after all. Returning home to pack, Cagney finds Barbara awaiting him with a gun—she had learned about Helena and about the fact that he had killed her brother. She shoots him dead when he tries to wrest the gun from her. Barbara's arrest brings to light the recordings, which the authorities use to convict all who had been involved with Cagney.

It was produced by William Cagney and directed by Gordon Douglas from a screen play by Harry Brown, based on Horace McCoy's novel of the same name.

Strictly adult fare.

"No Way Out" with Richard Widmark, Linda Darnell and Stephen McNally

(20th Century-Fox, no rel. date set; time, 106 min.)

Darryl F. Zanuck has come through with another powerful melodrama in this personal production, which revolves around the problems of a young Negro doctor who is accused by a vicious white Negro-baiting hoodlum of murdering his brother. It is a gripping, highly dramatic story that points up the problem of racial prejudice, and, though it does not furnish an answer, it certainly calls attention to the problem in an objective and meaningful way. The subject matter is presented in a bold, forceful manner, with free use made in dialogue and in action of the insulting tactics generally employed by Negro-baiters. It is not a picture for the squeamish, for the action is strong and hard-hitting from start to finish in its display of violence and brutality fanned by bitter hatreds. A most powerful and tense sequence is a race riot between the Negroes and whites of a slum district. The direction is expert and the acting excellent, with outstanding portrayals turned in by Richard Widmark, as the vicious, vindictive criminal; Linda Darnell, as his hardened sister-in-law who eventually turns against his viciousness; and Sidney Poitier, as the sensitive and sympathetic young Negro doctor:—

Having passed the State Board examination, Poitier, the lone Negro interne in a city hospital, is assigned to the prison ward by Stephen McNally, the head doctor, whose encouragement inspired him. Poitier's first case is Richard Widmark and Dick Paxton, brothers, who had been shot and captured during a holdup. Widmark, an intense Negro hater, insults Poitier and demands a white doctor, but the demand is ignored. Paxton dies as he is given first aid by Poitier, and Widmark accuses him of murder. Disturbed by the accusation, Poitier demands an autopsy, but Widmark, backed by the law, refuses to permit it and continues his claim of "murder." To avenge his brother's death, Widmark, through Linda Darnell, his brother's parted widow, arranges for his hoodlum pals in the slums to attack the Negro section. The Negroes, however, learn of the plan and attack first, sending numerous whites to the hospital. Poitier, endeavoring to treat them, suffers many indignities and quits. He then surrenders to the police on a confessed murder charge to force an autopsy on Paxton's body. The autopsy vindicates him, but Widmark, not satisfied with the coroner's verdict, escapes from the police, despite his crippled leg, and forces Linda against her will to trick Poitier into coming to an empty house, where he planned to kill him. Linda manages to notify the police and rushes to the house to save Poitier. She prevents his death by pulling a light switch just as Widmark fires. Widmark falls to the floor, half crazed from the pain of his bleeding leg, and the picture ends on an ironic note with Poitier, true to the medical code, applying a tourniquet to save Widmark from bleeding to death.

It was produced by Darryl F. Zanuck and directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, who wrote the original screen play with Lesser Samuels.

Adult fare.

ALLIED PREPARES FOR ALL-OUT DRIVE AGAINST EXCESSIVE FILM RENTALS

Meeting in Chicago on July 26-27 to formulate a plan of action against high film rentals currently demanded by the distributors, leaders of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors issued the following formal statement at the close of their two-day conference:

"Leaders from Allied territories meeting informally in Chicago by invitation of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, after discussing fully the conditions in the several territories, arrived at the following conclusions:

"1. That boxoffice receipts for the past three months range from 17½ to 35 per cent below the receipts for the corresponding months a year ago.

"2. That while the distributors have for many years forced themselves into an unwanted partnership with the exhibitors in draining off the profits of the theatres, they have not recognized the corresponding obligation to share losses resulting from the decline in business.

"3. That, on the contrary, reports from all territories indicate that the distributors are seeking to cushion themselves against the shocks of the current business decline by increasing domestic film rentals.

"4. That this is being accomplished by unsound allocations of pictures, by increased demands for percentage playing and for higher flat rentals.

"5. As a matter of simple justice and fair dealing the distributors must accept their fair share of the loss and immediately reduce film rentals proportionate to the decline in the boxoffice.

"6. That the exhibitors in justice to themselves and in order to perpetuate themselves in business, each acting for himself, should forthwith determine to reduce his film costs in accordance with this recommendation.

"7. That in the struggle to protect themselves in the present emergency, exhibitors should bear in mind that while 'must' percentage pictures are intolerable, it is equally dangerous for any exhibitor in times like this to think that he 'must' have any particular picture, regardless of the terms demanded therefor.

"8. That for the information of its exhibitors competent organization reviewers will assign to each picture that is trade shown a recommended allocation which exhibitors can use in place of the one-sided company allocations.

"9. That exhibitors should be reminded that under the decision of the Supreme Court they are entitled to buy their pictures selectively and no film company can lawfully retaliate against an exhibitor who exercises his right to pass a picture for which exorbitant terms are demanded, or to reject other pictures of questionable boxoffice value.

"10. All exhibitors should make a careful analysis of their film buying to determine an accurate profit and loss statement for each individual company.

"11. This meeting was held preliminary to the full consideration of this problem at the national Allied convention to be held at the William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh, October 2, 3 and 4. It is planned to hold individual sessions for theatres in like classification, where film and trade practices will be discussed."

"Jungle Stampede"

(Republic, July 29; time, 60 min.)

This photographic record of an expedition through the wilds of Africa is a routine jungle adventure film that should get by as a supporting feature wherever other films of this type have proved acceptable. The usual shots of bare-breasted native women makes the picture a natural for the so-called grind houses that deal in sensational ballyhoo methods. Similar in format to most jungle exploration pictures, the camera follows the expedition from Nairobi to a jungle region inhabited by Pygmies, whose primitive customs and mode of living are shown in detail. From there, the expedi-

tion travels to the Masai Country, where all types of wild animals are shown, such as gazelles, lions, zebras, buffalo, vultures, and many others. Highlights in the depiction of the wild animal life are exciting shots of an unsuccessful attempt to capture a young elephant; a vicious battle between a wart hog and a hyena; and an encounter with a school of hippopotami wallowing in a river. Worked into the action are some fanciful but obviously staged incidents, such as the stalking and killing of the expedition's native cook by a leopard, and the fall of one of the explorers into a snake pit, from which he makes a "miraculous" escape. In view of the fact that the cameraman is always present before these and other fantastic incidents occur, these sequences will probably be greeted with derisive laughter by all but the very naive. One distasteful sequence, which is enough to make the picture unsuitable for the family, depicts a Masai marriage ceremonial. It is objectionable, not only because of the primitive tribal dances, which emphasize indecent movements, but also because of the manner in which the camera dwells on the pre-marital anointment of the bare-breasted bride, with undue emphasis on the painstaking way in which the male anointer smears oil on her breasts.

It was directed by George Breakston, who co-produced it with Yorke Coplen. This pair also produced "Urubu," which United Artists distributed in 1948.

"On the Isle of Samoa" with Jon Hall and Susan Cabot

(Columbia, August; time, 65 min.)

Poor. There is no earthly reason why this picture should have been made. The story is inane, and the spectator is made to watch, from the beginning to the end, the doings of a crook and double-crosser. The fact that he becomes regenerated in the last scenes does not help the picture. The direction has been wasted on this worthless story material. The only good thing that one can say about it is that the scenery is beautiful. The title, however, leads one to think that it is a travelogue rather than an assembly-line produced picture. The photography is good:—

Jon Hall, a former war pilot, leads Jacqueline de Wit, wife of Ben Weldon, his employer, to believe that he loves her when he, in reality, loves only money. He enlists her aid to rob her husband's safe at the Seven Seas Cafe in Sydney, Australia. When Weldon surprises them and attempts to retrieve the money, Hall knocks him down and prepares to leave without Jacqueline. Weldon, recovering, attempts to shoot both his wife and her lover, but kills only his wife. Hall charts a plane for Honolulu, but the flight is cancelled because of a rising hurricane. Determined to get away, he knocks the pilot unconscious and takes off in the plane himself. But he is overtaken by the hurricane and forced to crash land on a remote island seldom visited by ships. He sprains his leg in the crash. He is treated kindly by Raymond Greenleaf, a missionary, the only white man on the island, and by the natives. Susan Cabot, a beautiful native girl, is affectionate towards him. Despite their fine treatment, however, Hall determines to leave at the first opportunity. Meanwhile he teaches Susan how to make love, and hides the stolen money. The missionary, while examining the plane, accidentally touches the radio lever and hears a broadcast that Hall is wanted in Sydney for Jacqueline's murder. To get away quickly, Hall persuades several natives to clear a runway for the plane, and at this point discovers that the money is missing from the hideout—a monkey had dug it up and the missionary had taken care of it for Hall. Believing that the missionary had stolen the money, Hall strikes him, but he begs his forgiveness when he learns the truth. By this time Hall discovers that he is really in love with Susan. He leaves for Sydney on the first available boat to clear his name, promising Susan that he will return to make his home on the island with her as his wife.

The story is by Joseph Santley; the screenplay by Brenda Weisberg and Harold Green. It was produced by Wallace MacDonald, and directed by William Berke.

Harmless for the family.

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COMPO WEATHERS THE STORM

The most heartening news of the week is the unanimous agreement reached on Wednesday by COMPO's executive board on a program of united industry cooperation with the Government in the present emergency.

For the past two weeks, the future of COMPO looked dark because of the deadlock created by the objections of the Theatre Owners of America to certain provisions of the resolution presented at the Board's July 24 meeting, whereby COMPO would have been authorized to assume the responsibility of dealing with the different Government agencies in the present war effort on all matters that affect the motion picture industry as a whole.

The TOA's chief objections were that, under the resolution's provisions, theatre owners would lose their autonomy of action in matters that affect exhibition, and that the TOA itself would lose the power of a veto.

With the deadlock hampering COMPO's efforts to "get off the ground," and with the need for a united industry front greater than ever, Ned E. Depinet, COMPO's president, called an emergency meeting of the COMPO executive board for Wednesday of this week to find a solution, and it is to the credit of all concerned that a serious breach in COMPO's ranks was averted by the unanimous adoption of a new resolution that overcomes TOA's objections and establishes a COMPO Committee for Cooperation with the Government.

The complete text of the resolution is as follows:

"RESOLVED by the Executive Board of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, Inc.

"1. THAT Ned E. Depinet, President, be authorized and instructed to send a communication to the President of the United States offering him as Commander-in-Chief of our Armed Forces, the full cooperation in the present crisis of the organizations which are charter members of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, Inc., and representatives of the American motion picture industry.

2. THAT the officers of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, Inc. (the President, the nine Vice-Presidents and the Treasurer) or alternates designated by each of them, is hereby constituted as a committee to be known as the COMPO Committee for Co-operation with the U. S. Government. The Secretary of COMPO shall serve as the secretary of the committee without vote.

"The primary functions of said committee are:

"(a) To develop a satisfactory liaison between officials of the U. S. Government and the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, Inc., as representative of all branches of the organized American motion picture industry, including exhibition, distribution, production, the crafts, the guilds, the trade press, and the Variety Clubs; to establish the necessary direct contacts with departments and bureaus of the Federal Government whose activities either involve the cooperation of the motion picture industry or affect the successful functioning of the motion picture industry during the present crisis, and take all necessary steps to protect the essential operations of the motion picture industry as a vital medium of communication and information within the United States and the free world.

"(b) To formulate and recommend to the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, Inc., Executive Board for approval a program of cooperation designed to assist the U. S. Government and the United Nations in the informational and morale fields;

"(c) To protect and utilize the industry's status as an important medium of communication; and

"(d) To secure for the motion picture industry the necessary materials and manpower required for its effective functioning throughout the critical period.

"Said committee created by and responsible to the Executive Board of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, Inc., is authorized to act by unanimous vote of the members of the said committee on matters within the scope of the authority delegated to it by the Executive Board provided, however, that such committee shall have no authority to pledge the motion picture screens of America to the exhibition of any informational or other film or films made by or for the U. S. Government, unless such film or films be first approved by a special Screen Sub-committee representing the five exhibitor organizations which are charter members of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, Inc., which committee shall be set up at once, and provided further that this committee shall have no authority to pledge the production or distribution of any gratis film or films for the U. S. Government unless and until the representatives of the Motion Picture Industry Council, the Motion Picture Association of America and the Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers vote affirmatively in favor thereof or unless and until some named producer or distributor or one of the above charter members advises the committee in writing of a willingness to produce and/or distribute such film or films without cost.

"Minutes of the meeting of such committee shall be sent to absentee member or members and unless a negative vote is recorded by such absentee members with respect to any action or actions within five days after receipt thereof, such minutes shall be deemed to have been approved by such absent member or members.

"The committee is authorized and instructed to appoint the necessary persons and sub-committees to effectuate properly the purposes of this resolution and this committee.

"All indebtedness incurred by the committee with the authorization of the Executive Board shall be paid out of the funds collected by COMPO through the medium of the approved finance plan effective as of September 1, 1950."

At this writing (Thursday), COMPO's executive board is meeting for the second consecutive day of sessions to consider reports of the different functional committees and to study ways and means of putting the finance plan into operation by September 1 so that the organization may become a going concern.

By the unanimous adoption of the foregoing resolution, the leaders of COMPO have overcome a serious crisis in intra-industry relations and have reestablished confidence in the organization. Through COMPO, we now have a unified industry liaison with the Government, and under such a setup the industry will be in a position to exert tremendous influence and create invaluable good will.

20TH CENTURY-FOX DARES TO BREAK AWAY FROM PRECEDENTS

The inauguration of a plan of "scheduled performances," a unique idea that recognizes the desirability of having movie-goers see certain pictures from the very beginning and at the same time calls the public's attention to the picture as being something special, has been announced by Spyros P. Skouras, president of 20th Century-Fox, in connection

(Continued on back page)

"A Life of Her Own" with Lana Turner and Ray Milland

(MGM, September; time, 108 min.)

Good adult entertainment, with a particular appeal for women. The theme is a delicate one—that of a love affair between a beautiful model and a married man, who is unable to get a divorce because of an invalid wife; yet it has been handled discreetly and at no time becomes offensive. The principal characters are sympathetic, and the hopelessness of their love makes for an ending that may disappoint some, but it is logical. Several of the situations, particularly the one where the model visits the invalid wife and finds herself unable to reveal her love for the woman's husband, are highly dramatic. Lana Turner, as the model, is effective, and the beautiful clothes that she wears should intrigue the woman folk. Ann Dvorak is exceptionally good as a frustrated top model, a "has been" who is driven to drink and suicide:—

Lana, a small-town girl, comes to New York to make good as a model, and is engaged by Tom Ewell, owner of a top model agency. There she meets Ann, who persuades her to accompany her on a double-date that night with Barry Sullivan, her boy-friend, and Louis Calhern, an attorney. Although Lana tries to discourage him, Sullivan lavishes his attentions on her, infuriating Ann. Later, after warning Lana never to become like herself—a "has been," Ann commits suicide. On the following day, Sullivan makes a play for Lana, but she brushes him off. In due time Lana becomes one of the most successful models in New York, and through Calhern, now a dear friend, she meets Ray Milland, owner of a copper mine, who had come to New York on business. They fall deeply in love with each other, but Milland, married to Margaret Phillips, an invalid, whose paralytic illness he had inadvertently caused, feels morally bound not to divorce her. Lana accepts the situation and lives with Milland secretly as his mistress. But when his wife comes to New York for an extended visit, and Milland is compelled to stay with her, Lana is unable to bear his absence and decides to visit Margaret for a showdown. Arriving at Margaret's apartment, Lana permits her to believe that she is just a friend of Calhern's, who had accompanied her. Margaret is most gracious to her, and when Lana notices how happy she is despite her serious affliction, she becomes ashamed of the importance she had put on her own suffering; she does not reveal her affair with Milland, and walks out of his life in the full realization that their love is hopeless.

It was produced by Voldemar Vetluguin and directed by George Cukor from a screen play by Isobel Lennart.

Adult fare.

"High Lonesome" with John Barrymore, Jr., Chill Wills and Lois Butler

(Eagle Lion Classics, Sept; time, 81 min.)

Photographed in Technicolor, this is a fairly engrossing Western melodrama with a mystery angle. Revolving around a sullen and defiant 17-year-old lad who is victimized by two murdering outlaws whose mysterious movements make him a suspected killer, the story is complex and somewhat hazy, and is given more to talk than to action. The Western fans who are fond of gun-battles, fist-fights and hard-riding pursuits will find a minimum of this type of action, except for the closing scenes, where the lad traps the murderers after a furious gun-fight. The direction and performances are passable, and the outdoor photography outstanding:—

Exhausted and hungry after evading two pursuing horsemen, John Barrymore, Jr. makes his way to Basil Ruysdael's ranch, where he is caught stealing food by Chill Wills, the cook. Sullen and defiant, the lad refuses to answer questions about himself, but when he is dragged along the ground at the end of a rope he confesses to the murder of a storekeeper nearby, claiming that he had been forced to commit the crime by two strangers. Ruysdael and his ranch hands go to the store to check the boy's story, and find the place covered with dust and with no evidence of a murder. All are puzzled, however, when the lad's description of the strangers fit two men who had been killed by Ruysdael's ranch hands in a fence war fifteen years previously. Feeling sorry for the boy, Ruysdael permits him to stay at the ranch. Kristine Miller and Lois Butler, Ruysdael's daughters, learn to like

him. Barrymore sees the strangers several times, but they disappear before he can point them out, causing every one to believe that his mind is affected. When the parents of John Archer, a neighboring rancher, are killed, Archer attempts to link Barrymore with the crime, but Ruysdael defends him for lack of proof. Later, Wills is murdered by the strangers in Barrymore's presence, and the lad, fearing that he will be blamed, sets out to find the storekeeper's body to prove that he had told the truth. While searching for the body, Barrymore meets up with the strangers while Ruysdael, now believing that the lad is really a killer, pursues him. Barrymore, risking his life, shoots down the strangers as they try to ambush the approaching Ruysdael. The mystery is solved when the strangers are recognized as the sons of the men who had died in the fence battle: they had sought to avenge their fathers' deaths. Ruysdael, grateful to Barrymore, insists that the boy make the ranch his permanent home.

It was produced by George Templeton and written and directed by Alan Lemay.

Suitable for the family.

"Dark City" with Lizabeth Scott, Charlton Heston and Viveca Lindfors

(Paramount, October; time, 97 min.)

Just fair. For all its production polish, this melodrama of violence and murder, with a romantic triangle twist, cannot cover up the fact that its story is artificial and shallow, the situations fabricated, and the characterizations blurred. It should, however, get by with those who are not too concerned about story values, for considerable suspense is generated by the fear that grips three crooked gamblers who become aware that they are being stalked by a maniacal killer, who is unknown to them as well as to the audience. Although the sequence of events make for suspense they are not convincing. The film marks the debut of Charlton Heston, a rugged, handsome personality, who does fairly well as a sullen gambler, in spite of the fact that the characterization is not clearly defined. The triangular romantic complications involving Heston, Viveca Lindfors and Lizabeth Scott lack substance:—

Heston, bitter and disillusioned because of an unfaithful wife, is co-owner of a cheap bookie joint with Ed Begley and Jack Webb. While visiting Lizabeth, a torch singer in a night-club, who was very much in love with him, Heston meets at the bar Don DeFore, a Californian, who had come to Chicago to purchase athletic equipment for a club. Learning that DeFore is carrying a \$5,000 cashier's check, Heston lures him into a crooked poker game with his partners and fleeces him of the money. DeFore commits suicide in remorse. Shocked by this happening, the gamblers decide not to cash the check until the case blows over. Begley is found murdered on the following day, and Heston and Webb are questioned at police headquarters by Captain Dean Jagger, who voices his suspicion that Begley's murder is connected with DeFore's suicide. He explains that DeFore's suicide had been reported by DeFore's brother, a mentally deranged man, who had vowed on the phone to kill the gamblers who had cheated his brother. Aware that he and Webb were being stalked by a killer, whom no one, not even the police, could identify, Heston decides to visit Viveca Lindfors, DeFore's widow in Los Angeles, to obtain a photo of the brother. He wins her confidence by posing as an insurance investigator but is unable to obtain the photo. They soon fall in love and he reveals the truth about himself. Meanwhile the killer catches up with Webb and murders him. Heston hurriedly leaves for Las Vegas, where he obtains a job as a card dealer and is joined by Lizabeth. Several days later, he receives a frantic call from Viveca, warning him that the brother had discovered that he is in Las Vegas. In the course of events, Heston is trapped by the killer (Mike Mazurki), but timely action by the police saves him from harm. Faced with the problem of returning to Viveca or remaining with Lizabeth, Heston chooses the singer.

It was produced by Hal B. Wallis and directed by William Dieterle from a story by Larry Marcus, who wrote the screen play in collaboration with John M. Lucas.

Adult fare.

**"Bunco Squad" with Robert Sterling,
Joan Dixon and Ricardo Cortez**
(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 67 min.)

A fairly good program thriller, revolving around police efforts to break up a ring of fake mediums who victimize bereaved persons by pretending to communicate with the dead. It is an unpretentious production, and its story is not startling, but it should serve adequately as a supporting feature in secondary theatres, for it has a generous share of fast action, excitement and intrigue. The direction and acting are competent, considering the confines of the script:—

En route by train to Los Angeles, Ricardo Cortez, a swindler, makes the acquaintance of Elizabeth Risdon, a wealthy widow, who was bringing back the body of her soldier son for burial. He meets also Marguerite Churchill, her secretary, from whom he learns that Miss Risdon is consulting a fake psychologist. Arriving in Los Angeles, Cortez rents a pretentious house, rounds up Bernadine Hayes, a fake medium; Vivien Oakland, a fortune teller; Robert Bice, a fake swami; and John Kellogg, a con man, and establishes them under the name of the Rama Society, devoted to the study of the occult. He then compels the fake psychologist to steer Miss Risdon to the Society's house, where Bernadine, through information obtained by Cortez, convinces her that she is in communication with her dead son, and influences her to make a will leaving her millions to the society. Marguerite, alarmed over the situation, confides to Cortez that she is going to the police. He sends her to her death by tampering with the brakes of her car—a means he planned to employ on Miss Risdon as soon as she signed the will. Meanwhile Robert Sterling and Douglas Fowley, of the police department's bunco squad, discover that Bernadine and the other fakes had disappeared from their usual haunts. They trace them to the Rama Society, where they see Miss Risdon and realize that she is being prepared for a fleecing. When she refuses to listen to their warnings, the police set up Joan Dixon, Sterling's girl-friend, as a medium, to win Miss Risdon's confidence and lure her away from the Rama Society. Cortez, learning that Miss Risdon had been to another medium, thinks a rival crook is trying to chisel in on him. He visits Joan, ties her up, and carries Miss Risdon out of the house, determined to kill her at once. Just then the police arrive. Cortez drops Miss Risdon and jumps into her car to escape, forgetting that he had tampered with the brakes. Unable to stop the car, he plunges to his death over a cliff.

It was produced by Lewis J. Rachmil and directed by Herbert I. Leeds from a screen play by George Callahan, suggested by a story by Reginald Tavinier.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Let's Dance" with Betty Hutton
and Fred Astaire**

(Paramount, November; time, 111 min.)

This Technicolor mixture of comedy, romance, music and dancing should prove to be a pretty good box-office attraction because of the popularity of Betty Hutton and Fred Astaire, but as entertainment it is not exceptional. The story is thin, hackneyed and even silly in spots, and its running time of 111 minutes is much too long, making for a number of dull stretches. Musically, however, the picture is fairly satisfying, for Astaire's dance routines are fascinating, and the spirited singing style of Betty Hutton, who joins Astaire in several dance numbers, is highly effective. The musical highlight of the picture, one that is good for many laughs, is the "Oh, Them Dudes" square dance number, with Betty and Astaire dressed as old-time Western gunmen. The comedy for the most part is broad and should entertain those who are easily amused:—

The story opens in 1944 with Betty and Astaire entertaining troops in England. When he proposes marriage, she informs him that she had secretly married a soldier who lived in Boston, because she had become tired of waiting for him (Astaire) to propose to her. Five years later finds Betty a widow with a young son, living unhappily in the strait-laced atmosphere of the Boston home of Lucille Watson, her husband's wealthy grandmother. Rebelling against the restrictions, Betty "kidnaps" her son and heads for

New York to reenter show business. Several months later, jobless and broke, she meets Astaire, who barely supports himself dancing in a night-club. He helps her obtain a job as cigarette girl at the club, where her son, adored by the help, leads a topsy-turvy life by sleeping during the day and staying awake during the night. Roland Young and McIlville Cooper, Miss Watson's attorneys, trace Betty to the night-club and start a suit to gain custody of the child for the grandmother on the grounds that the night-club atmosphere is unhealthy for him. In court, the judge sympathizes with Betty and grants her 60 days in which to establish a proper home for the child, a decision that stems from Astaire's announcement that he will marry her. But a quarrel between Betty and Astaire disrupts the marriage plans, and Betty becomes involved with Shepperd Strudwick, a wealthy college chum of Astaire's, while Astaire makes a play for Ruth Warrick, Miss Watson's granddaughter. After numerous complications, during which Betty and Astaire keep baiting each other, the court officials take the child to the grandmother because of Betty's failure to establish a proper home. Betty again kidnaps her son and, after much confusion, she agrees to marry Astaire and is permitted by Miss Watson to retain the child.

It was produced by Robert Fellows and directed by Norman Z. McLeod from a screen play by Allan Scott, suggested by a story by Maurice Zolotow. The cast includes Harold Huber, Barton MacLane, George Zucco and others. Suitable for the family.

**"The Black Rose" with Tyrone Power,
Orson Welles and Cecile Aubry**
(20th Century-Fox, October; time, 120 min.)

From the production point of view, this costume adventure melodrama leaves nothing to be desired; it is a magnificent Technicolor spectacle, filmed in England and North Africa on a highly lavish scale, and its backgrounds, which range from medieval England and its massive castles to the Mongolian desert and the lush palaces of ancient China, give the film an opulence that is breathtaking in its magnificence. Unfortunately, the quality of the rambling story does not match that of the production values, for their long dull stretches where the pace is extremely slow because of excessive dialogue. Moreover, the editing is choppy, and a number of the sequences lack coherence.

Briefly, the story, which is based on Thomas B. Costain's best-selling novel, takes place at the time of the Saxon Norman feuds in the 13th Century. Tyrone Power, a young Saxon, the illegitimate son of a dead nobleman, refuses to serve the Norman king and decides to leave England to seek adventure in the Far East. He takes along Jack Hawkins, a friend. Months later they arrive in Antioch, where they join a caravan led by Orson Welles, a tyrannical Mongolian war lord, whose troops were carrying gifts to the Kubla Khan in Mongolia, including Cecile Aubry, a slave girl, known as the Black Rose. Welles takes a liking to the two daring Englishmen, and in the course of events Power rescues Cecile and falls in love with her. When Hawkins can no longer stomach Welles' savageries, Power arranges for him to escape to China with Cecile. Welles puts Power to torture for aiding the escape but spares his life. When Welles' troops reach the China border, he dispatches Power to impress the Empress with the size of his army, hoping to score a bloodless coup. Arriving at the palace, Power is taken for a God and soon finds himself quartered with Hawkins and Cecile. They are treated royally, and learn from the Chinese the secret of the compass, and of making paper and explosives. In due time Welles attacks the city, and all three, now imprisoned by the Chinese, decide to escape. Hawkins dies in the escape attempt, and Cecile loses her way, but Power manages to return safely to England, where he is honored by the king and his estates restored for bringing back the Chinese secrets. His happiness is complete when two Mongol officers arrive with Cecile, sent to him by Welles as a friendly gesture.

Although the pace is generally slow, the action does have moments of high excitement, such as troop maneuvers in the desert; a dramatic bow-and-arrow contest; and the punishment meted out to Power, who is made to walk a thick rope while Mongol soldiers hit him with inflated pig bladders so that he might lose his balance and fall on upended knives. The extensive advertising campaign Fox is giving to this picture should be of considerable help at the box-office.

It was produced by Louis D. Lighton and directed by Henry Hathaway from a screen play by Talbot Jennings. Suitable for the family.

with the exhibition of "All About Eve," the forthcoming Darryl F. Zanuck production, which stars Bette Davis and Anne Baxter in a story about the ruthless determination of an ambitious young actress to become a top legitimate star.

The plan, as revealed by Mr. Skouras at a trade press conference held in New York this week, calls for the exhibitor to set a definite time for each performance of the picture, and to sell non-reserved tickets in advance for each specific performance, with no one, not even ticket-holders, permitted to enter the theatre after the feature is started. Late-comers with tickets may obtain either a refund or tickets for another performance. The main purpose behind the plan, according to Mr. Skouras, is to make movie-patrons see the picture from the beginning, because if the ending is seen first it will spoil one's enjoyment of the rest of the picture. Consequently, by refusing admittance to late-comers, the exhibitor will void the possibility of unfavorable word-of-mouth advertising.

Mr. Skouras, in revealing the details of the plan, stressed the point that "All About Eve" is not a "problem" picture. It is, he said, pure entertainment, but being a unique type of film it requires this special treatment which, he believes, will redound to the financial benefit of both the exhibitor and his company, and at the same time help movie-goers to fully enjoy and appreciate the picture.

As an example of how the plan will work, Mr. Skouras said that the Roxy Theatre, the company's showcase in New York City, which will show the picture early in October, will offer four shows daily, possibly five on Saturdays, with different colored non-reserved tickets used for each specific performance. After each showing there will be a 25 to 30-minute intermission, during which the lights will be turned up and the theatre emptied in readiness for the next performance. At each complete show, the patrons will be seated during the showing of the newsreel and short subjects, but no one will be seated after the start of the feature.

Pointing out that the picture has a running time of two hours and twenty minutes, Mr. Skouras said that the license agreement will call for single-billing but that there will be no objections to the use of a newsreel, short subjects or a stage show to round out the program. The "scheduled performances" plan, too, will be made a part of the contract. Mr. Skouras said that his company will decline to sell the picture to any exhibitor who will not agree to accept the single-billing and "scheduled performances" provisions of the contract.

Mr. Skouras made it clear that the price of admission is to be determined by the exhibitor himself, and stated that the Roxy Theatre will show the picture at no advance in the regular admission prices.

Supplementing Mr. Skouras' remarks, Charles Einfeld, vice-president in charge of advertising and publicity, stated that the company will back the plan with a vast national advertising campaign, including trailers, with special emphasis put on the "scheduled performances" method of presentation.

Mr. Skouras was careful to point out that the method of presentation planned for "All About Eve" is not intended to supplant the present method of continuous exhibition of pictures. It is experimental only, he said, and is adaptable to a picture such as "All About Eve," because of its extraordinary characteristics. If the experiment proves successful, he continued, his company plans to adapt the policy to other suitable pictures, and he added that the success of the policy may very well influence producers to develop new story ideas that will lend themselves to this method of presentation.

Another point stressed by Mr. Skouras is that the single-billing requirement in the exhibition contract for this picture is not to be construed as a step towards the elimination of the double-bill. He said that, though he personally does not approve of double-bills, the continuance of that policy can best be determined by the individual exhibitor.

The idea of scheduled performances as conceived by 20th Century-Fox is indeed worthy of the exhibitor's thoughtful consideration for several reasons: First, as Mr. Skouras pointed out, the plan should encourage attendance by many people who stay away from theatres rather than stand on line awaiting admittance and then not see a picture from the beginning; secondly, as pointed out by Mr.

Einfeld, the plan is a novel showmanship idea, one that is bound to attract potential patrons because of their natural curiosity; thirdly, even though the intermission periods may reduce the number of shows the theatre can schedule, the novel method of exhibition may attract greater attendance despite fewer shows; and, fourthly, the plan will compel movie-goers to see the picture from the beginning and should, if the picture is as exceptional as claimed, result in fine word-of-mouth advertising which, as every exhibitor knows, is what really makes a picture successful at the box-office.

One of the most important features of this plan, in the opinion of this writer, is that, if successful, it should provide the producers with an incentive to conceive and develop original story ideas rather than waste their ability as well as the valued services of our stars and technical experts in the production of pictures based on half-baked, inane, mediocre or shallow themes, which are doing more damage to the industry than all the competitive entertainment mediums combined, including television.

Not having seen "All About Eve," this writer is in no position to pass judgment on its entertainment values, but, assuming that the picture is all that it is claimed to be, there is every reason to believe that the "scheduled performances" policy under which it will be exhibited will be successful. HARRISON'S REPORTS sincerely hopes that it will be a rousing success, but no matter what the outcome this paper believes that 20th Century-Fox is to be commended for bringing into exhibition an idea that dares to get away from the "tried and true" and is far different from the ideas that have heretofore been adapted by exhibition in this country.

By this plan, 20th Century-Fox has once again demonstrated the type of aggressive showmanship our industry needs to stimulate greater theatre attendance.

"County Fair" with Rory Calhoun, Jane Nigh and Warren Douglas

(Monogram, July 30; time, 77 min.)

A fine sulky-racing Cinecolor picture, with a great deal of human interest. Despite the good acting by Rory Calhoun, Jane Nigh and Warren Douglas, the three principals, Florence Bates "steals" the picture with her fine performance. Being an old trouser, she handles her part with skill and walks off with the acting honors. The action is fast, keeping one interested through the entire length of the picture. The romance is charming, despite the triangle twist. The photography is good; the color, fair:—

Florence Bates, operator of a hamburger stand concession, travels from one county fair to another with Jane Nigh, her daughter, who helps her. Miss Bates has one weakness—wagering on trotting races, which Jane tries to prevent in vain. One day she gives Jane ten dollars to bet on horse number 6, and Jane, through an error, places the bet on horse number 8. She realizes her mistake and tries unsuccessfully to change the pari-mutuel ticket. Rory Calhoun, son of Emory Parnell, owner of a stable of trotting horses, offers to exchange his number 6 ticket for her number 8 and, after making the swap, persuades her to keep both tickets, but he does not tell her that horse number 8 is owned by his father. Number 8 wins, pays heavy odds, and Jane returns to her mother with two hundred dollars. Jane, who had been in love with Warren Douglas, a racer, soon finds herself deeply in love with Calhoun, a situation Douglas gracefully accepts. Meanwhile Calhoun discovers that Jane's mother owned a hamburger stand, a fact Jane had tried to conceal. Miss Bates, aspiring to be a horse owner, buys Henry the Eighth, a "has been" trotter, at an auction sale. Calhoun, seeking to make her happy, arranges for her to become a bonafide member of the racing club. Miss Bates then decides to race the horse, and Calhoun, knowing that the animal cannot win, persuades the other horse owners to throw the race in favor of Miss Bates' horse in a manner that does not affect the public. Henry the Eighth wins, and Calhoun's father, to stop Miss Bates from ruining herself, claims the horse for fifteen hundred dollars. Meanwhile Calhoun claims Jane as his bride.

Walter Mirisch produced it for Jeffrey Bernerd. It was directed by William Beaudine from a screen play by W. Scott Darling.

Excellent for family audiences.

:

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No. 33

MORE ABOUT THE COMPO MEETING

Having agreed on a compromise resolution to establish the Council of Motion Picture Organizations as the industry's sole liaison with the Government during the present emergency, thus overcoming obstacles that threatened to doom COMPO before it could get "off the ground," the executive board of COMPO moved swiftly on Thursday (10), the final session of its two-day meeting last week, to set in motion the organization's machinery at the earliest possible date.

Most important of the actions taken by the board was the unanimous election of Arthur L. Mayer as executive vice-president for a term of one year, at a salary of \$25,000. As COMPO's only paid executive, Mr. Mayer will supervise the overall activities of the organization.

Mr. Mayer, for many years identified with exhibition and distribution, served during the war as a key member of the War Activities Committee staff. Later, he was film consultant to Secretary of War Patterson, and in 1945-46 acted as assistant to Basil O'Connor, chairman of the American Red Cross, in which capacity he made surveys for the Red Cross in the Pacific, the Far East and in Europe. In 1948-49 he served as chief of the film branch of the American Military Government in Germany, and is presently film consultant to the Economic Cooperation Administration. Because of Mr. Mayer's vast experience in the fields of exhibition, distribution and publicity, he is, in the opinion of this paper, an ideal choice to fill the important post as COMPO's executive vice-president.

Other actions taken by the board at the final session included:

1. Formal adoption of the financing plan, whereby exhibitors will contribute voluntarily to COMPO an amount equal to one-tenth of one per cent of their film rentals (10¢ on each \$100), with the distributors contributing a sum equal to that collected from the exhibitors.

2. Established a COMPO Committee on Research, which will formulate plans for industry surveys and market analyses to help all branches of the industry in regard to both public relations and box-office.

3. Unanimously approved COMPO's sponsorship of two industry seminars on the problems of production and exhibition, one to be held in Hollywood and another in a grass roots area yet to be selected.

4. Authorized Ned E. Depinet, president of the organization, to send appropriate individual letters to the 238,000 person who make their living in the

motion picture industry, appointing each as a "committee of one" to work for the improvement of the industry's public relations and to strive for greater harmony within the industry.

5. Recommended that the distributors include in their future press books institutional advertising material to help exhibitors create industry good will at the local level.

6. Adopted resolutions for the establishment of libraries of industry information in Hollywood and New York; the creation of a Speakers' Bureau, which will prepare special kits for speakers; the production of a training film to help industry employees to better serve the public; and the inauguration of a single annual collection for charitable causes.

COMPO's executive board, under the able leadership of Ned E. Depinet, accomplished much at the two-day meeting in New York last week. The job that confronted the board presented many obstacles, but the board proved that no task is too great for men who are willing to cooperate, to give and take, and to be fair and just.

Through COMPO, we now have attained the stability and teamwork necessary to best protect and promote the interests of the motion picture industry. Let us make the most of it.

A WISE MOVE BY WARNER BROTHERS

An all-out nation-wide search for original screen stories has been launched by Warner Brothers, according to an announcement made this week by Jack L. Warner, vice-president in charge of production, who said that the search will be a continuing and important part of his studio's operations in the future.

Pointing out that he was encouraged by recent additions to his company's story property lists from the field of originals, Mr. Warner said that at least half of the industry's great box-office successes have been based on originals, and that an examination of screen history proves that the original story is the foundation of the motion picture industry.

In stating that "originals written especially for the screen and having no prior limitation imposed by other mediums are, in my opinion, the basis of our business," Mr. Warner made the following salient points:

1. Stories created for the camera require no doctoring to fit them to the screen. This is an advantage, he said, "because doctoring usually causes a loss in transmission, just as most engravings do not carry the full values of the original."

(Continued on last page)

**"Right Cross" with June Allyson,
Dick Powell, Ricardo Montalban
and Lionel Barrymore**

(MGM, October; time, 90 min.)

A good prizefight story, capably directed and acted. Revolving around the problems of a champion boxer who mistakenly believes that he must retain his title and become wealthy lest he lose his girl, the story holds one's attention well because of the interesting plot developments, which include a romantic triangle. Although the story is quite dramatic in spots, it is not a heavy entertainment by reason of the glib dialogue. The principal characters—Ricardo Montalban, as the fighter, June Allyson, as his sweetheart, and Dick Powell, as his best friend, an easy-going sportswriter who, too, loved June—are appealing. The fight scenes at the finish are exceptionally good, ranking with the best ever seen on the screen:—

Montalban, a middleweight champion, is managed by June, whose invalided father, Lionel Barrymore, a one-time top promoter, had him under contract. Through Montalban, Barrymore hoped to regain his lost prestige. While training for an approaching bout, Montalban injures his right hand. The doctor assures June and Powell that the hand will heal in time for the fight, but to Montalban the doctor confided that the bones in his hand had become brittle, and that another injury would end his career. Montalban broods over the doctor's warning; retirement, he felt, would mean losing June, and would reduce him to struggling for a living at one of the menial jobs he is convinced are reserved for those with his Mexican blood. Hoping to find security, Montalban makes a tentative deal with Barry Kelley, a rival promoter and virtual czar of the boxing game, who offers him a sound future in his vast organization even after his fighting days are over. Montalban's desire to end their contract is a blow to Barrymore, who suffers a stroke and dies. June blames Montalban for his death, and turns to Powell, but none of the three is happy. Powell becomes disturbed when he learns that Montalban's opponent in the forthcoming fight has discovered a weakness in Montalban's defense. He tries to warn Montalban, only to be rebuffed, then predicts in his column that Montalban will lose the championship. Powell's prediction comes true on the night of the fight. Angered when Powell comes to his dressing room to offer condolences, Montalban hits him with his bare knuckles, and smashes his weakened hand. He retires from the ring to face a blank future, but June, having learned the reason for his past attitude, goes to him and convinces him that the loss of his title was no bar to their future happiness.

It was produced by Armand Deutsch and directed by John Sturges from an original screen play by Charles Schnee.

Acceptable family fare.

**"Tea for Two" with Doris Day,
Gordon MacRae and S. Z. Sakall**

(Warner Bros., Sept. 2; time, 98 min.)

A gay Technicolor musical that should leave audiences well satisfied, for it is peppy, has good musical interpolations, and enjoyable comedy situations. The story itself is not very substantial, but it has been given a good treatment and serves nicely as a framework for the effective singing of Doris Day and Gordon MacRae, the spectacular dancing of Gene Nelson, the clowning of Billy De Wolfe and S. Z. Sakall, and the

smart dialogue with which Eve Arden has a way. Most of the melodious songs were hit tunes in the early thirties and they are just as enjoyable today. In addition to her pleasant way of putting over a song, Doris Day is surprisingly good in several dance sequences.

Told in flashback, the story takes place during the early days of the 1929 depression. Doris, a wealthy singer, is not told by Sakall, her guardian, that most of her money had been lost in the stock market crash, and she proceeds with plans to finance a show produced by De Wolfe, a fast-talking promoter, featuring the music of Gordon MacRae, a struggling composer and singer. De Wolfe had already promised the lead to Patrice Wymore, but he had given it to Doris instead in order to secure her backing. Still unwilling to tell Doris the truth about her financial situation, Sakall makes a deal with her whereby he will give her the funds she needs provided she says "no" to every proposal made to her for a period of forty-eight hours. Doris' strict adherence to the terms of the deal soon results in no end of confusion during rehearsals and leads to a number of romantic misunderstandings between MacRae and herself. At the end of forty-eight hour period Doris explains to everyone's satisfaction the reason for her negative attitude, then asks Sakall for the money. Just then Bill Goodwin, Doris' attorney, arrives on the scene and informs her that she has no money. Rising to the emergency, Eve Arden, Doris' secretary, uses her charms on Goodwin, who had not been hurt by the market crash, and persuades him to put up the money for the show.

It was produced by William Jacobs and directed by David Butler from a screen play by Harry Clark, suggested by the play, "No, No, Nanette."

Fine for the family.

**"The Petty Girl" with Robert Cummings
and Joan Caulfield**

(Columbia, September; time, 87 min.)

Although this Technicolor offering shapes up as no more than a fairly entertaining romantic comedy with music, it should do pretty good business at the box-office because of the fame of the Petty Girl drawings. There is not much to the story, and some of the attempts at comedy fall flat, yet on the whole the picture manages to be pleasantly diverting. Physically, Joan Caulfield more than meets the demands of the leading role as she cavorts about in the scantiest of costumes. A highlight of the picture is the huge production number at the finish, where a dozen beautiful girls become living illustrations of the Petty calendar girls, with each, dressed in revealing and appropriate costumes, representing a different month of the year. The music is undistinguished:—

Robert Cummings (as George Petty), artist-creator of the Petty Girl, unsuccessfully tries to sell his illustrations to an auto firm for exploitation. But Cummings, himself, arouses the interest of Audrey Long, the predatory married daughter of the firm's owner, who decides to sponsor his career as a high-brow portrait painter. While visiting a New York art museum, Cummings encounters Joan, in whom he sees all the attributes required for a perfect Petty Girl model. He contrives to meet her through Elsa Lanchester, her elderly companion, and learns that both are professors in a staid New England college, and that they had come to New York to attend an educational conference. He inveigles Joan into a round of night-life gaiety, and the gay whirl ends up in court when they are caught in a raid and Joan is mistaken

for a model who had posed undraped. Hurt and humiliated, she returns to the college. Cummings follows her there, obtains a job as a handyman and, after winning her love, persuades her to pose for a Petty Girl drawing. A snoopy member of the faculty discovers that Joan is posing, and the resultant scandal causes Joan to flee to New York to marry Cummings. She finds him in the clutches of Audrey, now a divorcee, who had sold him on the idea that he can become a great painter. To counteract Audrey's influence, Joan plants Cummings' drawing of herself as a Petty Girl at an exhibit of his serious paintings, and wins nation-wide publicity as the Petty Girl. She then prepares to star in a burlesque show, but Cummings has a writ served to prevent her appearance. Undeterred, Joan takes her girlie show to a swank party given by Audrey for Cummings. The show is so sensational that Audrey's father immediately signs Cummings to a contract to exploit his cars with Petty Girl illustrations. Now aware that glamour art is his forte, Cummings embraces Joan.

The screen play was written and produced by Nat Perin, based on a story by Mary McCarthy. It was directed by Henry Levin.

Unobjectionable for the family.

"The Dancing Years" with an all-British cast

(Monogram, no rel. date set; time, 98 min.)

Produced in England and photographed in Technicolor against beautiful interior and exterior 1911 Vienna backgrounds, "The Dancing Years" is a charming, sentimental mixture of romance and lilting operatic music. It is a delight to the eye as well as to the ear, for, in addition to Ivor Novello's tuneful score, the picture has been given a first-rate production, with beautiful women, handsome officers and an impressive ballet sequence. The story itself is not too original; nevertheless, it has emotional appeal, and as entertainment should please those who enjoy classical music. As to how it will be received by the rank-and-file picture-goers is another matter, for the players, though good, are unknown in this country, and the overall pace is slow:—

Dennis Price, an aspiring but impoverished composer, is befriended by Gisele Preville, a beautiful opera star, who arranges for his opera to be produced with herself in the leading role. The operetta proves to be a huge success, and a great romance develops between Price and Gisele. For three years the lovers delight audiences throughout Austria, but Gisele is somewhat unhappy because of Price's failure to ask her to marry him. Price, however, had his reason: As a penniless composer, he had promised Patricia Danton, his landlady's pretty niece, who believed herself in love with him, that he would never ask any woman to marry him until he had given her first refusal. Following their successful tour, Price and Gisele go to the mountains for a holiday, and Patricia, now a dancer, is invited to join them. Patricia playfully holds Price to his promise. Gisele overhears him propose but leaves before Patricia refuses him. She hurries to Anthony Nicholls, a nobleman who had long loved her, and tells him her story, including the fact that she is going to have Price's child. Nicholls, devoted to her, marries her at once. On the following day, Gisele returns to congratulate Price and Patricia and is shocked to learn that she had misunderstood the proposal. In the ten years that follow, Price reached new heights of fame, but he remains unhappy

longing for Gisele. He finally meets her in Vienna, and for the first time learns that he is the father of her son. Realizing that they cannot get together again, they part, gratified that their son will always be a reminder of their love.

It is an Associated British-Pathe production, produced by Warwick Ward and directed by Harold French from a screen play by Mr. Ward and Jack Whittingham.

Adult fare.

"The Fireball" with Mickey Rooney, Pat O'Brien and Beverly Tyler

(20th Century-Fox, October; time, 84 min.)

This shapes up as a fairly good action melodrama by virtue of its novel background—professional roller skating, which has become a top indoor sport in recent years. The story, which is the old one about the rise of an underprivileged youngster who lets success go to his head, is rather weak, for the hero's ingratitude towards those who had helped him alienates whatever sympathy the audience feels for him at the beginning. He becomes, in fact, so disagreeable a character in his behavior towards his friends and teammates that even when he is struck down by polio one's emotions are not stirred much. In the end, of course, he makes amends, but by that time one's feelings for him are cold. On the credit side are the good performances, amusing comedy touches, the swift pace and the exciting action in the roller derby sequences:—

Mickey Rooney, an undersized orphan reared in a Catholic Home for Boys, develops an inferiority complex because of his size. Frustrated in his attempts to cope with bigger boys in athletic games, Rooney destroys some of the school's athletic equipment and runs away when Pat O'Brien, the priest in charge, arranges for a psychiatrist to interview him. Roaming the streets, Rooney finds a pair of roller skates and, despite many falls, finds skating enjoyable. He obtains a job as a dishwasher, and spends his evenings at a roller skating rink, where Beverly Tyler, a professional skater, teaches him the art. At the rink, Rooney clashes with Glenn Corbett, a skating champ, and the two wind up hating each other. Meanwhile O'Brien had learned of Rooney's whereabouts, but does not compel him to return to the home in the hope that independence may solve his problems. With the start of the roller derby season, Rooney sits in a front seat every night, screaming insults at Corbett. The crowd begins to enjoy his stream of abuse, and eventually Corbett, to save face, is compelled to accept Rooney's challenge to a race. Rooney loses when he is thrown over the rail by Corbett with a body blow, but sensing his popularity with the crowd he determines to become a professional. Under Beverly's guidance, he soon learns the tricks of the game. He becomes a teammate of Corbett's, and before long is hailed as the world's outstanding skater. His ego and conceit become unbearable to everyone, and at the very crest of his fame he is struck down by polio. O'Brien and Beverly encourage him, and he recovers his health in two years, during which time he learns humility. But once back on the rink he resumes his old ways. O'Brien takes him in hand and, at the finish, he rids himself of conceit and wins the friendship of his teammates.

It was produced by Bert Friedlob and directed by Tay Garnett, who wrote the original screen play with Horace McCoy.

Suitable for the family.

2. The creation of originals directly for the screen relieves the industry of dependence on plays, published works, magazine articles and other sources.

"In other words," Mr. Warner said, "originals are insurance that there will be a supply of filmable material. We will not have to take our chances on whether the coming months or years make other kind of material available. If the Broadway stage has a bad season, if the publishers don't bring out the kind of books and stories we can buy for adaptation to the screen, we'll still have a bank of good stories to go on. We then will be more self-sufficient. We will be availing ourselves of the writing talent which is already experienced in the creation of the kind of material the screen can use best.

"We particularly want newspapermen to tell us about their pet original story ideas. We believe their close-up view of life can contribute not only greater originality but even greater vitality to the screen. Their knowledge of men and women and what interests the public gives them wonderful opportunities. We are working now on a plan which will tell every newspaperman in the country who covers any kind of beat and has any ideas how he can best get his story ideas to our attention. Proof of the value of newspaper experience lies in the list of members of the Screen Writers Guild and the numerous producers who broke into the industry after they had learned the newspaper business.

"We will implement our plan to bring more originals from more writers to our story department for consideration with a special budget of flexible nature. It will be a steady, continuing routine of studio operation. We won't limit ourselves to story prices. We will pay what we believe the material is worth. And we have a high regard here for originals. We'll buy a good idea, however short it may be, although we will always prefer to acquire stories containing full and basic ingredients. The ideal, of course, would be to find original screen plays ready to shoot. But the point is that we will buy anything good that comes to us if it has the promise of becoming a hit screen play."

Mr. Warner emphasized the fact that "names" were not necessary, and that a good idea was acceptable from anyone who had an original story to tell. "We want, in fact," he continued, "to have writers think of us immediately when they have ideas for original screen plays. We want submissions and will take the necessary steps to see that they are properly read and judged as quickly as possible."

Having long been an advocate of new talent in the motion picture industry, particularly in regard to the creators of original story ideas, HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to commend Mr. Warner for deciding to make an extensive search for original stories a continuing and important part of his studios operations in the future.

Up to now, as said many times in these columns, those who conceive original ideas and develop them into picture stories must first earn a reputation elsewhere before Hollywood will pay any attention to them, no matter how fine is their story material. There has been an exception now and then, but such has been Hollywood's attitude in the main. This attitude, of course, has served to discourage many brilliant but unknown writers and, consequently, has done much to choke off the conceiving of original stories for motion pictures.

One of the biggest mistakes that is constantly repeated by the production executives is that, in determining whether or not a story is suitable material for a motion picture, they are not guided by their own judgment, the result of years of experience; they prefer to invest in the published works of famous authors, or successful stage plays, often paying a king's ransom for the screen rights. The practice has many pitfalls, for often a successful stage play is for select audiences, or a great novel is for literary clientele, thus making the material hardly suitable for motion pictures, which cater to masses.

In many cases, the producers realize that a famous stage play or a novel is not suitable for the screen, but they buy it regardless, and then hand it to their writers to make something out of it. Thus it often happens that the story is changed completely, with nothing but the title left of the original work, in which case many movie-goers, familiar with the original, leave the theatre with a feeling of having been deceived.

The history of the business shows that any number of producers who resorted to original stories attained excellent results. Take, for example, the case of Joe Pasternak, who made Deanna Durbin into a box-office sensation. Realizing that Miss Durbin had a personality that required suitable story material to establish her, Mr. Pasternak, rather than buy a novel or stage play to bring out her talent, found the necessary material in the brains of story originators. Had he taken less care in his search for a proper story, it is unlikely that he would have attained the same success with Miss Durbin.

If the producers want an abundance of good story material, they should follow the lead of Warner Brothers and encourage the creators of original story ideas, for such encouragement will spell the difference between a large number of meritorious pictures as against the few that are produced nowadays.

REISSUES THAT ARE AVAILABLE FOR TELEVISION

Classic Pictures, Inc., a distribution organization headed by Max J. Rosenberg and Albert Margolies, has acquired the reissue rights in the United States to twenty-two Alexander Korda features, which were originally reissued by Film Classics.

Because all the pictures involved, with the possible exception of "That Hamilton Woman" and "The Challenge," have been available for television during the past eighteen months, the list is herewith published for the guidance of this paper's subscribers:

"Drums," in Technicolor, starring Ralph Richardson; "Four Feathers," in Technicolor, starring Sabu and Raymond Massey; "Private Life of Henry VIII," starring Charles Laughton; "Jungle Book," in Technicolor, starring Sabu; "The Ghost Goes West," starring Robert Donat; "The Divorce of Lady X," in Technicolor, starring Merle Oberon and Ralph Richardson; "Elephant Boy," starring Sabu; "Rembrandt," starring Charles Laughton; "Things to Come" and "The Man Who Could Work Miracles," both by H. G. Wells; "The Private Life of Don Juan," starring Douglas Fairbanks, Sr.; "Thief of Bagdad," in Technicolor; "Lydia," starring Merle Oberon; "Catherine the Great," starring Elisabeth Bergner and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.; "Men Are Not Gods"; "Murder in Diamond Row"; "Sanders of the River"; "Spy in Black"; "Q Ships"; and "Over the Moon," in Technicolor.

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Federal Man—Eagle-Lion (67 min.)	106
Furies, The—Paramount (109 min.)	103
High Lonesome—Eagle-Lion (81 min.)	126
Hi-jacked—Lippert (65 min.)	122
Humphrey Takes a Chance—Monogram (62 min.)	104
If This Be Sin—United Artists (72 min.)	103
Jungle Stampede—Republic (60 min.)	124
Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye—Warner Bros. (102 min.)	123
Lady Without Passport, A—MGM (72 min.)	111
Let's Dance—Paramount (111 min.)	127
Life of Her Own, A—MGM (108 min.)	126
Lost Volcano, The—Monogram (76 min.)	104
No Way Out—20th Century-Fox (106 min.)	123
Old Frontier, The—Republic (60 min.)	not reviewed
On the Isle of Samoa—Columbia (65 min.)	124
Once a Thief—United Artists (88 min.)	103
Pretty Baby—Warner Bros. (92 min.)	119
Savage Horde, The—Republic (90 min.)	102
711 Ocean Drive—Columbia (102 min.)	110
Snow Dog—Monogram (63 min.)	118
Stella—20th Century-Fox (83 min.)	115
Streets of Ghost Town—Columbia (54 min.)	not reviewed
Summer Stock—MGM (109 min.)	122
Three Little Words—MGM (102 min.)	107
Trial Without Jury—Republic (60 min.)	114
Where the Sidewalk Ends—20th Century-Fox (95 m.)	102
Union Station—Paramount (80 min.)	110

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Allied Artists Features

(1560 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

(Distribution through Monogram)

16 There's a Girl in My Heart—Knox-Bowman-Jean..Jan.

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

241 Frightened City—Keyes-Korvin-Bishop	May
235 Kill the Umpire—Bendix-Merkel	May
245 Cowtown—Gene Autry (70 m.)	May
238 No Sad Songs for Me—Sullivan-Corey	May
203 Beauty on Parade—Hutton-Warrick	May 4
204 Customs Agent—Eythe-Reynolds	May 18
237 The Good Humor Man—Carson-Albright	June
233 Fortunes of Captain Blood—Hayward	June
251 Hecdown—Eddy Arnold	June
266 Texas Dynamo—Charles Starrett (54 m.)	June 1
202 State Penitentiary—Baxter-Stevens	June 8
243 Rogues of Sherwood Forest—Derek-Lynn	July
244 711 Ocean Drive—O'Brien-Dru	July
247 Beyond the Purple Hills—Gene Autry (70 m.)	July
240 Captive Girl—Johnny Weissmuller	July
220 David Harding, Counterspy—St. John-Long	July 13
242 In a Lonely Place—Bogart-Grahame	Aug.

Convicted—Ford-Crawford	Aug.
215 On the Isle of Samoa—Jon Hall	Aug.
264 Streets of Ghost Town—Starrett (54 m.)	Aug. 3
207 Beware of Blondie—Lake-Singleton	Aug. 10
Prowl Car—Stevens-O'Brien-Storm	Sept.
Indian Territory—Gene Autry	Sept.
The Petty Girl—Cummings-Caulfield	Sept.
262 Across the Badlands—Starrett	Sept. 14
When You're Smiling—Courtland-Albright	Sept. 21

Eagle-Lion Classics Features

(165 West 46th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

031 Kind Hearts & Coronets—British cast	Apr.
029 Kill or be Killed—Tierney-Colouris	Apr.
015 The Perfect Woman—British cast	Apr.
032 The Jackie Robinson Story—Robinson	May
027 The Winslow Boy—Donat-Hardwicke	May
107 The Fallen Idol—Richardson-Morgan	May
012 The Glass Mountain—Cortesa-Denison	May
056 Twin Beds—reissue	May
057 Getting Gertie's Garter—reissue	May
066 Timber Fury—Bruce-Lee	June
030 It's a Small World—Dale-Miller	June
016 The Blue Lamp—British cast	June
055 Up in Mabel's Room—reissue	July
054 Tillie's Punctured Romance—reissue	July
058 Abroad with Two Yanks—reissue	July
050 Death of a Dream—Documentary	July
Federal Man—Henry-Blake	July
026 Destination Moon—Archer-Anderson	Aug.
025 The Torch—Goddard-Armendariz	Aug.
045 Eye Witness—Montgomery-Banks	Aug.
044 High Lonesome—Barrymore-Wills	Sept.
046 The Sun Sets at Dawn—Reed-Parr	Sept.
Golden Salamander—British cast	Sept.
Naughty Arlette—British cast	Sept.

Film Classics Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

Good Time Girl—British cast	May 11
Sudan—reissue	June 1
Arabian Nights—reissue	June 1
One Night in the Tropics—reissue	June 15
Naughty Nineties—reissue	June 15
Captain Kidd—reissue	June 30
The Bridge of San Luis Rey—reissue	June 30
The Wind is My Lover—Linfors-Kent	not set

Lippert-Screen Guild Features

(255 Hyde St., San Francisco 2, Calif.)

4930 West of the Brazos—Ellison-Hayden	Apr. 28
4910 Operation Haylift—Williams-Rutherford	May 5
4925 Colorado Ranger—Ellison-Hayden	May 12
4904 Rocketship XM—Bridges-O'Brian	June 2
4926 Crooked River—Ellison-Hayden	June 9
4923 Motor Patrol—Castle-O'Brian	June 16
4929 Fast on the Draw—Ellison-Hayden	June 30
4920 Hijacked—Davis-Jones	July 14
4932 Gunfire—Barry-Lowery	Aug. 11
4931 I Shot Billy the Kid—Barry-Neal	Aug. 25
4907 Return of Jesse James—Ireland-Dvorak	Sept. 8
4934 Train to Tombstone—Barry-Neal	Sept. 15
4933 Border Rangers—Barry-Neal	Oct. 6
4911 Holiday Rhythm—All-star cast	Oct. 13

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

25 The Reformer & the Redhead—Powell-Allyson	May
26 Please Believe Me—Kerr-Walker-Lawford	May
27 Shadow on the Wall—Sothorn-Scott	May
28 The Big Hangover—Johnson-Taylor	May
30 Father of the Bride—Tracy-Bennett-Taylor	June
31 Skipper Surprised His Wife—Walker-Leslie	June
29 The Asphalt Jungle—Hayden-Hagen	June
32 The Happy Years—Stockwell-Hickman	July
33 Duchess of Idaho—Williams-Johnson	July

(Continued on next page)

- 41 Crisis—Grant-Ferrer July
 35 Mystery Street—Montalban-Forrest July
 36 Three Little Words—Astaire-Skelton-Ellen Aug.
 37 Lady Without Passport—Lamar-Hodiak Aug.
 38 Summer Stock—Garland-Kelly Aug.
 Toast of New Orleans—Grayson-Lanza-Niven..... Sept.
 34 Devil's Doorway—Robert Taylor Sept.
 A Life of Her Own—Turner-Milland Sept.
 38 The Miniver Story—Garson-Pidgeon Oct.
 Right Cross—Powell-Allyson-Montalban Oct.
 To Please a Lady—Gable-Stanwyck Oct.
 Dial 1119—Thompson-Brasselle Nov.
 Two Weeks with Love—Powell-Montalban Nov.
 King Solomon's Mines—Kerr-Granger Nov.
 Kim—Flynn-Stockwell Dec.
 The Camera Man—Red Skelton Dec.
 Cause for Alarm—Young-Sullivan Dec.
 Pagan Love Song—Williams-Keel-Montalban..... Dec.
 The Next Voice You Hear—Whitmore-Davis... not set
 39 Annie Get Your Gun—Hutton-Keel not set
 40 Stars in My Crown—McCrea-Drew not set

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- 4914 Lucky Losers—Bowery Boys May 14
 4912 Humphrey Takes a Chance—Kirkwood June 4
 4924 Side Show—McGuire-Roberts June 18
 4905 Bomba and the Lost Volcano—Sheffield June 25
 4942 Arizona Territory—Whip Wilson (56 m.)... July 2
 4923 The Silk Noose—Carole Landis (formerly
 "The Silk Stocking Murder") July 9
 4919 Snow Dog—Kirby Grant July 16
 4903 County Fair—Calhoun-Nigh Aug. 6
 4915 Triple Trouble—Bowery Boys Aug. 13
 4943 Silver Raiders—Whip Wilson Aug. 20
 4908 Big Timber—McDowall-Donnell Sept. 10
 4953 Massacre Valley—J. M. Brown Sept. 17
 4906 Bomba and the Hidden City—Sheffield... Sept. 24
 4918 Hot Rod—Lydon-Winters Oct. 22
 4916 Bowery Thrush—Bowery Boys Oct. 29

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

1949-50

- 4919 No Man of Her Own—Stanwyck-Lund May
 4916 Eagle & the Hawk—Payne-Fleming-O'Keefe ... June
 4922 My Friend Irma Goes West—Wilson-Lynn ... July
 4923 The Lawless—Carey-Russell July
 4926 The Furies—Stanwyck-Huston Aug.
 4927 Sunset Boulevard—Swanson-Holden Aug.
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 5001 Fancy Pants—Hope-Ball Sept.
 5002 Union Station—Holden-Olsen Sept.
 Copper Canyon—Lamarr-Milland Oct.
 Dark City—Heston-Scott Oct.
 Going My Way—reissue Oct.
 Let's Dance—Hutton-Astaire Nov.
 Tripoli—Payne-O'Hara Nov.
 Mr. Music—Crosby-Coburn-Hussey Dec.

RKO Features

1948-49

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

- 017 Woman on Pier 13—Day-Ryan
 (formerly "I Married a Communist").....
 069 Man on the Eiffel Tower—Tone-Laughton
 070 Stromboli—Ingrid Bergman
 019 Storm Over Wyoming—Tim Holt (60 m.).....
 018 The Tattooed Stranger—Miles-White
 020 Tarzan and the Slave Girl—Barker-Darcel
 073 The Capture—Wright-Ayres
 074 Wagonmaster—Johnson-Drew
 022 Dynamite Pass—Tim Holt (61 m.)
 021 The Golden Twenties—Documentary
 075 The Secret Fury—Colbert-Ryan
 023 The White Tower—Ford-Valli
 024 Where Danger Lives—Mitchum-Domergue
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 191 Treasure Island—Driscoll-Newton
 151 Our Very Own—Blythe-Granger-Evans
 101 Born To Be Bad—Fontaine-Ryan
 104 Bunco Squad—Sterling-Dixon
 152 Edge of Doom—Granger-Andrews-Evans
 103 Outrage—Andrews-Powers
 102 Walk Softly, Stranger—Valli-Cotten
 105 Border Treasure—Tim Holt

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

1949-50

- 4961 The Arizona Cowboy—Rex Allen (67 m.) .. Apr. 1
 4916 Woman from Headquarters—
 Huston-Rockwell May 1
 4952 Hills of Oklahoma—Rex Allen (67 m.)... May 1
 4964 Salt Lake Raiders—Lane (60 m.) May 1
 4914 Rock Island Trail—Tucker-Mara May 18
 4917 The Savage Horde—Elliott-Booth May 22
 4918 Destination Big House—Patrick-Rockwell .. June 1
 4920 The Avengers—Carroll-Mara June 26
 4945 Trigger, Jr.—Roy Rogers (68 m.) June 30
 4965 Covered Wagon Raid—Lane (60 m.) June 30
 4921 Trial Without Jury—Rockwell-Taylor July 8
 4973 The Old Frontier—Monty Hale (60 m.)... July 29
 4922 Jungle Stampede—Documentary July 29
 4966 Vigilante Hideout—Allan Lane (60 m.)... Aug. 6
 4924 The Showdown—Elliott-Brennan-Windsor .. Aug. 15
 4925 Lonely Heart Bandits—Patrick-Rockwell... Aug. 29
 Frisco Tornado—Allan Lane Sept. 6
 Redwood Forest Trail—Rex Allen Sept. 18
 Prisoners in Petticoats—Perkins-Rockwell ... Sept. 18
 Sunset in the West—Roy Rogers Sept. 25
 (more to come)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 5001 Surrender—Ralston-Carroll Sept. 15

Selznick Rel. Org. Features

(400 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.)

- The Fallen Idol—British cast Nov.
 The Third Man—Welles-Valli-Cotten Feb.

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

- 012 The Big Lift—Clift-Douglas May
 011 A Ticket to Tomahawk—Baxter-Dailey May
 013 Night and the City—Tierney-Widmark June
 016 Love That Brute—Douglas-Peters June
 015 The Gunfighter—Gregory Peck July
 017 Where the Sidewalk Ends—Andrews-Tierney ... July
 018 Stella—Sheridan-Mature-Wayne Aug.
 020 The Caribou Trail—Randolph Scott Aug.
 014 Broken Arrow—Stewart-Paget Aug.
 019 The Black Rose—Power-Aubrey-Welles Sept.
 021 My Blue Heaven—Grable-Dailey Sept.
 022 Panic in the Streets—Widmark-Douglas Sept.
 Farewell to Yesterday—Documentary Sept.
 The Fireball—Rooney-O'Brien Oct.
 Mister 880—Lancaster-Gwenn-McGuire Oct.
 No Way Out—Widmark-Darnell Oct.
 Two Flags West—Darnell-Wilde-Cotten Nov.
 All About Eve—Davis-Baxter Nov.
 The Jackpot—Stewart-Medina Nov.
 American Guerrilla in the Philippines—
 Power-Prelle Dec.
 For Heaven's Sake—Bennett-Webb-Blondell... Dec.

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- Johnny One-Eye—O'Brien-Morris-Moran May 5
 So Young, So Bad—Henreid-McLeod May 19
 The Whipped—Duryea-Storm-O'Shea June 2
 Iroquois Trail—Montgomery-Marshall June 16
 Once a Thief—Romero-Havoc-McDonald July 7
 The Underworld Story—Duryea-Storm (reviewed
 as "The Whipped") July 21
 The Admiral Was a Lady—Hendrix-O'Brien Aug. 4
 The Men—Brando-Wright Aug. 25
 If This Be Sin—Loy-Cummins-Greene Sept. 8
 Ellen—Young-Drake-Sutton not set

Universal-International Features

(445 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

- 916 Comanche Territory—O'Hara-Carey May
 917 I Was a Shoplifter—Brady-Freeman-King May
 918 Curtain Call at Cactus Creek—O'Connor-Arden.. June
 919 Sierra—Murphy-Hendrix June
 920 Spy Ring—Toren-Duff June
 921 Winchester '73—Stewart-Winters-Duryea July
 922 Peggy—Lynn-Coburn-Greenwood July
 923 Adam and Evelyn—British cast July
 924 Abbott & Costello in the Foreign Legion Aug.
 925 The Desert Hawk—De Carlo-Greene Aug.
 926 Louisa—Coburn-Gwenn-Byington Aug.
 927 Madness of the Heart—English cast Aug.
 928 Saddle Tramp—McCrea-Hendrix Sept.
 929 Shakdown—Duff-Donlevy-Dow Sept.
 930 The Sleeping City—Conte-Gray-Dow Sept.
 Hamlet—Laurence Olivier Oct.

Wyoming Mail—McNally-SmithOct.
 Woman on the Run—Sheridan-O'KeefeOct.
 The Milkman—O'Connor-DuranteOct.
 905 Tight Little Island—British castnot set

Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

1949-50

921 The Damned Don't Cry—Crawford-BrianMay 13
 922 Colt .45—Scott-Roman-ScottMay 27
 923 Destination Tokyo—reissueJune 3
 924 God Is My Co-Pilot—reissueJune 3
 925 Caged—Parker-MooreheadJune 10
 926 This Side of the Law—Lindfors-SmithJune 17
 927 Return of the Frontiersman—McRae-London....June 24
 928 Bright Leaf—Cooper-Bacall-CarsonJuly 1
 929 The Great Jewel Robbery—David BrianJuly 15
 930 The Flame and the Arrow—Lancaster-Mayo ..July 22
 931 50 Years Before Your Eyes—Documentary....July 29
 932 Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye—CagneyAug. 19

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

001 Tea for Two—Day-McRaeSept. 2
 002 Alcatraz Island—reissueSept. 9
 003 San Quentin—reissueSept. 9
 004 Pretty Baby—Morgan-Drake-ScottSept. 16
 005 Breaking Point—Garfield-NealSept. 30

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

2857 Meet the Winners—Screen Snapshots
 (10 m.)Apr. 26
 2653 Village Barn—Cavalcade of B'way (10½ m.)..Apr. 27
 2609 The Wise Owl—Favorite (reissue) (7 m.)...May 4
 2808 Clown Prince of Golf—Sports (8½ m.)...May 25
 2858 Famous Cartoonists—Screen Snap. (9½ m.)..May 25
 2504 The Miner's Daughter—
 Jolly Frolics (6½ m.)May 25
 2610 The Little Moth's Big Flame—
 Favorite (reissue) (8½ m.)June 1
 2555 Candid Microphone No. 5 (11 m.)June 15
 2859 Hollywood Ice Capades—
 Screen Snap (10 m.)June 22
 2809 Hi Board Hi Jinks—Sports (9 m.)June 29
 2611 The Timid Pup—Favorite (reissue) (7 m.)...July 6
 2810 King of the Jockeys—Sports (9 m.)July 20
 2860 Hollywood's Famous Feet—
 Screen Snap (8½ m.)July 20
 2654 Leon & Eddie's—Cavalcade of B'wayJuly 27
 2505 Giddyap—Jolly Frolics (6½ m.)July 27
 2612 The Gorilla Hunt—Novelty (8 m.)Aug. 3
 2556 Candid Microphone No. 6 (10½ m.)Aug. 17

Columbia—Two Reels

2407 Love at First Bite—Stooges (16 m.)May 4
 2425 Nursey Behave—Vera Vague (15½ m.)...May 11
 2435 His Ex Marks the Spot—
 Favorite (reissue) (17½ m.)May 25
 2408 Self-Made Maids—Stooges (16 m.)July 6
 2426 One Shivery Sight—Hugh Herbert (16½ m.)..July 13
 2416 House About It—Quillan-Vernon (16½ m.)..July 20
 2180 Atom Man vs. Superman—Serial (15 ep.)...July 20
 2436 Oh My Nerves!—Favorite (reissue) (17 m.)..July 27

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

T-118 Roaming Thru Michigan—Travel. (9 m.) ..May 20
 W-143 Ventriloquist Cat—Cartoon (7 m.)May 27
 W-144 The Cuckoo Clock—Cartoon (7 m.)June 10
 S-159 That's His Story—Pete Smith (9 m.).....June 17
 W-164 Yankee Doodle Mouse—
 Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)June 24
 W-145 Safety Second—Cartoon (7 m.)July 1
 S-160 A Wife's Life—Pete Smith (8 m.)July 8
 Z-172 Moments in Music—Industry Short (10 m.)..July 13
 T-119 To the Coast of Devon—Traveltalk (9 m.)..July 15
 T-120 Touring Northern England—Travel. (9 m.)..July 29
 T-121 Land of Auld Lang Syne—Travel. (8 m.)..Aug. 12
 T-122 Life on the Thames—Traveltalk (9 m.)...Aug. 26
 W-146 Albert in Blunderland—Cartoon (8 m.)...Aug. 26
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Paramount—One Reel

1949-50

R9-7 Down Stream Highway—Spotlight (7 m.)..June 2
 P9-7 Ups an' Downs Derby—Noveltoon (7 m.)...June 9
 K9-5 Flatbush, Florida—Pacemaker (11 m.)June 16
 E9-6 Jitterbug Jive—PopeyeJune 23
 X9-9 Heap, Hep Injuns—Screen SongJune 30
 R9-8 To the Winner—Spotlight (10 m.)July 7

P9-8 Pleased to Eat You—Noveltoon (7 m.)July 21
 X9-10 Gobs of Fun—Screen Song (7 m.)July 28
 R9-9 The Sporting Suwannee—Spotlight (10 m.)..Aug. 4
 E9-7 Popeye Makes a Movie—PopeyeAug. 11
 P9-9 Goofy, Goofy, Gander—NoveltoonAug. 18
 X9-11 Helter-Swelter—Screen SongAug. 25
 R9-10 Operation Jack Frost—SpotlightSept. 1
 K9-6 Cowboy Crazy—PacemakerSept. 8
 P9-10 Saved by the Bell—NoveltoonSept. 15
 X9-12 Boos in the Night—Screen SongSept. 22
 E9-8 Baby Wants Spinach—PopeyeSept. 29

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

R10-1 Desert High Jinks—SpotlightOct. 6
 E10-1 Quick on the Vigor—PopeyeOct. 13
 B10-1 Casper's Spree Under the Sea—Casper.....Oct. 27
 P10-1 Voice of the Turkey—NoveltoonNov. 3
 R10-2 Outboard Shenanigans—SpotlightNov. 10
 E10-2 Riot in Rhythm—PopeyeNov. 17
 P10-2 Mice Meeting You—NoveltoonNov. 24
 X10-1 Fiesta Time—Screen SongDec. 1
 Z10-1 Her Honor, The Mare—ChampionDec. 8
 K10-2 The City of Beautiful Girls—Pacemaker...Dec. 22
 B10-2 Once Upon a Rhyme—CasperDec. 29

Paramount—Two Reels

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

T10-1 The New Pioneers—Special (20 m.)Sept. 1
 FF10-1 Mardi Gras—Musical Parade (19 m.)...Oct. 6
 FF10-2 Caribbean Romance—Musical Parade
 (19 min.)Nov. 3
 FF10-3 Showboat Serenade—Musical Parade
 (20 min.)Dec. 1

RKO—One Reel

04111 Crazy Over Daisy—Disney (6 m.)Mar. 24
 04208 Wonders Down Under—
 Screenliner (8 m.)Mar. 24
 04112 The Wonder Dog—Disney (7 m.)Apr. 7
 04308 Horseshow—Sportscope (8 m.)Apr. 7
 04704 Funny Little Bunnies—Disney (reissue)
 (7 m.)Apr. 21
 04209 Sunshine U—Screenliner (8 m.)Apr. 21
 04113 Trailer Horn—Disney (6 m.)Apr. 28
 04309 The Bauer Girls—Sportscope (8 m.)May 5
 04114 Primitive Pluto—Disney (7 m.)May 19
 04210 Country Rhythm—Screenliner (8 m.)May 19
 04310 Ski Riders—Sportscope (8 m.)June 2
 04115 Puss-Cafe—Disney (7 m.)June 9
 04211 School for Dogs—Screenliner (8 m.)June 16
 04116 Motor Mania—Disney (7 m.)June 30
 04311 Ben Hogan—Sportscope (reissue) (9 m.)...June 30
 04705 The Grasshopper & the Ant—
 Disney (reissue) (7 m.)July 7
 04212 Nickelodeon Time—Screenliner (9 m.)...July 14
 04117 Pests of the West—Disney (7 m.)July 21
 04312 Lady of the Deep—Sportscope (8 m.)...July 28
 04118 Food for Feudin'—Disney (7 m.)Aug. 11
 04706 Brave Little Tailor—
 Disney (reissue) (9 m.)Aug. 25

RKO—Two Reels

03108 Trading Post—This Is America (15 m.)...Apr. 28
 03405 Brooklyn Buckaroos—Comedy Special
 (16 m.)May 12
 03109 Play Ball—This Is America (13 m.)May 26
 03110 Danger Sleuths—This Is America (14 m.)..June 23
 03406 Photo Phonies—Comedy Special (16 m.)...July 7
 03111 House of Mercy—This Is America (15 m.)..July 21

Republic—One Reel

4975 Norway—This World of Ours (9 m.)Mar. 15
 4976 Denmark—This World of Ours (9 m.)...June 1
 9495 Battle for Korea—Special (9 m.)July 1
 4877 Glacier National Park—This World of Ours..July 15
 4978 Sweden—This World of OursAug. 30

Republic—Two Reels

4982 Radar Patrol vs Spy King (12 ep.)Apr. 15
 4983 Undersea Kingdom—
 Serial (12 ep.) (reissue)July 8
 4984 The Invisible Monster—Serial (12 ep.)...Sept. 30

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

5024 Just a Little Bull—Terry (reissue) (7 m.)...June
 8001 Mid-West Metropolis—Specialty (9 m.)...June
 5009 Law & Order (Mighty Mouse)—Terry. (7 m.)..June
 3006 Action with Rod & Reel—Sport (10 m.)...June
 5010 The Red Headed Monkey—Terrytoon (7 m.)..July
 8002 New York Philharmonic Orch.—Specialty
 (10 m.)July

(Continued on next page)

- 5011 Dingbat in All This & Rabbit Stew—Terry.
(7 m.) July
8003 Music of Manhattan—Specialty (10 m.) July
5012 The Dog Show—Terrytoon (7 m.) Aug.
7003 Skitch Henderson & Orch.—Melody (10 m.)... Aug.
5013 King Tut's Tomb (Talk. Magpies)—Terry.
(7 m.) Aug.
3007 Bowlers' Fair—Sports Sept.
5014 Little Roquefort in Cat Happy—
Terrytoon (7 m.) Sept.
3008 Football Pay-off Plays—Sports Sept.
5015 If Cats Could Sing—Terrytoon (7 m.) Sept.
5016 Little Roquefort in Mouse & Garden—
Terrytoon (7 m.) Oct.
3009 Circus on the Campus—Sports Oct.
5017 Beauty on the Beach (Mighty Mouse)—
Terrytoon (7 m.) Oct.
7004 The Fontaine Sisters—Melody Oct.
5018 Wide Open Spaces (Gandy Goose)—
Terrytoon (7 m.) Nov.
3010 Tee Girls—Sports Nov.
5019 Sour Grapes (Dingbat)—Terrytoon (7 m.)... Dec.
5020 Mother Goose's Birthday Party (Mighty Mouse)—
Terrytoon (7 m.) Dec.

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- Vol. 16 No. 3—Where's the Fire?—March of Time.. April
Vol. 16 No. 4—Beauty at Work—
March of Time (17 m.) June

United Artists—One Reel

- Glory Filled Spirituals—Songs of America (10 m.).. May 12
Highlights of Long Ago—Songs of America (9 m.).. June 9
Long Remembrances—Songs of America (9 m.)... July 14
Folk Lore—Songs of America (9 m.) Aug. 11
The Moods—Songs of America (9 m.) Sept. 15

Universal—One Reel

- 5328 The Beach Nut—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.).. May 8
5385 Harmony Hall—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)... May 8
5345 A Camping We Will Goo—
Variety Views (9 m.) May 15
5329 Boogie Woogie Man—Cartune
(reissue) (7 m.) June 12
5330 Fish Fry—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.) July 17
5386 Melody Moods—Cartoon Melody (10 m.).. July 17
5331 Toyland Premiere—
Cartune (reissue) (7 m.) Aug. 14
5387 Sing Happy—Cartoon Melody (10 m.).... Aug. 28
5332 Greatest Man in Siam—
Cartune (reissue) (7 m.) Sept. 11
5388 Feast of Songs—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)... Oct. 2
5333 Ski for Two—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)... Oct. 16
5346 Treasure of the Nile—Variety Views (9 m.).. not set
5347 Brooklyn Goes Hollywood—Variety Views
(9 m.) not set

Universal—Two Reels

- 5307 King Cole Trio—Musical (15 m.) May 17
5308 Claude Thornhill & Orch.—Musical (15 m.).. June 14
5356 Cactus Caravan—Musical Western (26 m.).. July 6
5309 Sarah Vaughan & Herb Jeffries—
Musical (15 m.) July 12
5310 Red Nichols & His Five Pennies—Musical
(15 m.) Aug. 9
5311 Salute to Duke Ellington—Musical (15 m.).. Aug. 30
5357 Western Courage—Musical Western
(26 m.) Aug. 31
5358 Ready to Ride—Musical Western (25 m.)... Oct. 5

Vitaphone—One Reel

1949-50

- 6310 Tic, Toc, Tuckered—
B. R. Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.) June 3
6508 Riviera Days—Sports Parade (10 m.) June 3
6601 Horse & Buggy Days—Novelty (10 m.)... June 17
6722 What's Up Doc?—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) June 17
6712 All Abirr-r-d—Merrie Melody (7 m.) June 24
6807 Matty Malneck & Orch.—Melody Master
(reissue) (10 m.) June 24
6311 Booby Hatched—B. R. Cartoon (reissue)
(7 m.) July 1
6405 So You Want to Hold Your Husband—
Joe McDoakes (10 m.) July 1
6509 Racing Thrills—Sports Parade (10 m.) July 8
6723 8-Ball Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) July 8
6713 It's Hummer Time—Merrie Melody (7 m.)... July 22
6808 Cliff Edwards & His Buckeroos—Melody Master
(reissue) (10 m.) July 22
6312 Trap Happy Porky—B.R. Cartoon
(reissue) (7 m.) Aug. 5

- 6714 Golden Yeggs—Merrie Melody (7 m.)..... Aug. 5
6606 Cavalcade of Girls—Novelty (10 m.)..... Aug. 12
6724 Hillbilly Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) Aug. 12
6406 So You Want to Move—
Joe McDoakes (10 m.) Aug. 19
6510 Champions of Tomorrow—
Sports Parade (10 m.) Aug. 19
6313 Lost & Foundling—B.R. Cartoon
(reissue) (7 m.) Aug. 26
6715 Dog Gone South—Merrie Melody (7 m.)... Aug. 26
6716 The Dicksters—Looney Tune (7 m.)..... Sept. 2
6717 A Fractured Leghorn—Looney Tune (7 m.).. Sept. 16
6725 Bunker Hill Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)... Sept. 23
6718 Canary Row—Looney Tune (7 m.)..... Oct. 7
6726 Bushy Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.) Nov. 11
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 7502 Grandad of Races—Sports Parade (10 m.).. Sept. 2
7301 Fagan's Freshmen—B. R. Cartoon (reissue)
(7 m.) Sept. 16
7401 So You Want a Raise—Joe McDoakes
(10 m.) Sept. 23

Vitaphone—Two Reels

1949-50

- 6007 Give Me Liberty—Special (20 m.)..... June 10
6106 Just for Fun—Featurette (20 m.)..... July 15
6008 Sweden with Charlie McCarthy & Mortimer
Snerd—Special (20 m.) Sept. 3
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 7001 Wish You Were Here—Special (20 m.).... July 29
7101 Wagon Wheels West—Featurette (reissue)
(20 m.) Sept. 9

NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

Warner Pathe News

- 104 Mon. (E) ... Aug. 14
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 1 Wed. (O) ... Aug. 16
2 Mon. (E) ... Aug. 21
3 Wed. (O) ... Aug. 23
4 Mon. (E) ... Aug. 28
5 Wed. (O) ... Aug. 30
6 Mon. (E) ... Sept. 4
7 Wed. (O) ... Sept. 6
8 Mon. (E) ... Sept. 11
9 Wed. (O) ... Sept. 13
10 Mon. (E) ... Sept. 18
11 Wed. (O) ... Sept. 20
12 Mon. (E) ... Sept. 25
13 Wed. (O) ... Sept. 27
14 Mon. (E) ... Oct. 2
15 Wed. (O) ... Oct. 4

Paramount News

- 103 Wed. (O) .. Aug. 16
104 Sat. (E) Aug. 19
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 1 Wed. (O) Aug. 23
2 Sat. (E) Aug. 26
3 Wed. (O) Aug. 30
4 Sat. (E) Sept. 2
5 Wed. (O) Sept. 6
6 Sat. (E) Sept. 9
7 Wed. (O) Sept. 13
8 Sat. (E) Sept. 16
9 Wed. (O) Sept. 20
10 Sat. (E) Sept. 23
11 Wed. (O) Sept. 27
12 Sat. (E) Sept. 30
13 Wed. (O) Oct. 4
14 Sat. (E) Oct. 7

Fox Movietone

- 67 Friday (O) ... Aug. 18
68 Tues. (E) ... Aug. 22
69 Friday (O) ... Aug. 25
70 Tues. (E) ... Aug. 29
71 Friday (O) ... Sept. 1
72 Tues. (E) ... Sept. 5
73 Friday (O) ... Sept. 8
74 Tues. (E) ... Sept. 12
75 Friday (O) ... Sept. 15
76 Tues. (E) ... Sept. 19
77 Friday (O) ... Sept. 22
78 Tues. (E) ... Sept. 26
79 Friday (O) ... Sept. 29
80 Tues. (E) ... Oct. 3
81 Friday (O) ... Oct. 6

News of the Day

- 300 Wed. (E) ... Aug. 16
301 Mon. (O) ... Aug. 21
302 Wed. (E) ... Aug. 23
303 Mon. (O) ... Aug. 28
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 200 Wed. (E) ... Aug. 30
201 Mon. (O) ... Sept. 4
202 Wed. (E) ... Sept. 6
203 Mon. (O) ... Sept. 11
204 Wed. (E) ... Sept. 13
205 Mon. (O) ... Sept. 18
206 Wed. (E) ... Sept. 20
207 Mon. (O) ... Sept. 25
208 Wed. (E) ... Sept. 27
209 Mon. (O) ... Oct. 2
210 Wed. (E) ... Oct. 4

Universal News

- 378 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 17
379 Tues. (O) ... Aug. 22
380 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 24
381 Tues. (O) ... Aug. 29
382 Thurs. (E) .. Aug. 31
383 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 5
384 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 7
385 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 12
386 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 14
387 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 19
388 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 21
389 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 26
390 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 28
391 Tues. (O) ... Oct. 3
392 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 5

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No. 34

MYERS ADVOCATES MODERATE INCREASE IN ADMISSIONS WHERE NECESSARY

In a bulletin issued to his membership on Tuesday of this week, Abram F. Myers, National Allied's general counsel and chairman of the board, had this to say on the question of increasing admission prices:

"Here, in brief, is the dilemma which faces the exhibitors:

"During the past 10 years operating costs have steadily increased.

"In the past three years there has been a box-office recession and in the past nine months the decline has been accelerated.

"Caught between the upper and nether millstone, the exhibitors are seeking means of escape.

"For awhile we hoped that Congress would repeal the admission tax and that that would stimulate attendance.

"The Korean war put an end to all hope for repeal of the admission tax and income taxes are to be increased, imposing an additional burden on the exhibitors.

"Apparently the only hope of immediate relief lies in increasing admission prices.

"And in doing this the exhibitors run the risk that higher admissions may further discourage attendance.

"But many exhibitors have no choice but to make the experiment; they cannot continue indefinitely under present conditions, and opportunities to reduce operating costs are limited and the process slow.

"Harsh as it may sound, we are again entering upon a war economy with attendant inflation; the prices of virtually all commodities have increased since the war broke out, and for the time being the public is inured to price rises.

"This is a favorable time for exhibitors who feel they must do so to advance their admission scales. Motion pictures must remain a popular entertainment and there is grave danger in making admissions too high. But there have been no increases for a long time, the exhibitors have demonstrated that they are not profiteers, and moderate increases at this time should be accepted by the public.

"It is in the public interest that the theatres remain open, and if that can be assured by a moderate price hike, then by all means let it be done."

In all probability Mr. Myers' suggestion will create considerable controversy, for nowadays many exhibitors will look upon an increase in admission prices as being too dangerous.

This paper is in sympathy with Mr. Myers' views, for the fact remains that, in the months ahead, the exhibitors will find themselves faced with steadily increasing operating costs as a result of more taxes, higher wages and the advance in price of every commodity needed by a theatre. And an increase in admission prices to cover these added costs does seem to be in order.

Each exhibitor, however, must study his own situation carefully before putting into effect an increase. Although the public is inured to price rises in these days, such an attitude may hold true only in regard to the necessities of life. It is, therefore, up to the individual exhibitor to determine whether or not an increase in his admission prices may cause resentment, and may prompt his patrons to protest in the only way they know—to reduce the number of times they normally go to his theatre.

Assuming, however, that an exhibitor decides to experiment with a nominal increase in the price of admission, the experiment should be tried immediately, for the gradual rise in the cost of living, and the new income tax rates that will soon be in effect are going to put a strain on everyone's pocketbook in the near future. Consequently, the picturegoers may be more receptive to an increase in admission prices today than they will be in about two or three months from now.

The real remedy, of course, lies in increased attendance; and that increased attendance may be brought about only by bettering the quality and entertainment values of the pictures.

Let us keep in mind that increased income tax rates and higher living costs compel most people to change their mode of living. For instance, many people who never bothered about living on a budget will suddenly become budget-conscious, and, when a man sits down to make up a budget, one of the first items he will pare will, no doubt, be the money that he and his family usually spend for entertainment. It is up to us to see that whatever is left in the family's entertainment fund finds its way into our box-offices instead of into the box-offices of other forms of amusement. And we can do that only by giving the family good entertainment values, thus imbuing them with a desire to go to the movies.

To repeat, the real solution to the problem of meeting rising operating costs and declining grosses is, not higher admission prices, but increased attendance. Still an increase in the admission prices is necessary where they are now too low.

COMPO RECEIVING PLEDGES OF ALL-OUT COOPERATION

Fulllest cooperation with COMPO in its war liaison activities has been pledged by National Allied, Loew's Theatres and three regional exhibitor organizations, according to an announcement by Arthur L. Mayer, COMPO's executive vice-president.

Trueman T. Rembusch, National Allied president, pledged the support of his association's 7,000 members in a letter to John R. Steelman, assistant to President Truman, in which he reaffirmed the pledge set forth in his wire of July 21 to the President.

The other pledges of cooperation were received from Earl J. Hudson, president of United Detroit Theatres, representing 500 Michigan exhibitors; J. B. Harvey, president of the Theatre Owners of North and South Carolina; W. F. Crockett, president of the Motion Picture Theatre Association of Virginia; and Joseph R. Vogel, head of Loew's Theatres.

Additionally, Abram F. Myers, in his membership bulletin issued this week, stated that COMPO in its present form "is as satisfactory a vehicle for cooperation in public relations as we could hope for."

Referring to the recent COMPO controversy, Mr. Myers said: "It was a tempest in a teapot and when the vapors cleared away COMPO emerged unscathed and unchanged. The rule that it must function by unanimous consent is written into the by-laws, it could not be changed except by unanimous consent, and there it remains. The wisdom of the rule is obvious in view of the diverse interests involved and its workability has been demonstrated by the fact that no single faction can flout organized industry opinion by exercising its veto capriciously."

Mr. Myers predicted that Allied's membership in COMPO, confined to a period of one year by the Minneapolis resolution, will be extended at the organization's forthcoming national convention, to be held in Pittsburgh on October 2, 3 and 4.

Meantime, he pointed out, COMPO must have funds with which to operate, and he urged all Allied members to begin contributing to Compo as soon as the financing plan goes into effect next month. That plan contemplates the voluntary payment by exhibitors of a sum equal to one-tenth of one per cent of their film rentals, with such payments to be matched by the distributors.

"So long as Allied is a part of COMPO," said Mr. Myers, "neither Allied nor its members should falter in their support of the movement."

**"Mister 880" with Burt Lancaster,
Dorothy McGuire and Edmund Gwenn**

(20th Century-Fox, October; time, 90 min.)

Excellent! In "Mister 880," 20th-Fox has come up with a completely satisfying, heart-warming comedy drama, one that will leave every type of movie-goer brimming with enjoyment. Word-of-mouth advertising should make the picture one of the box-office champs of the year. Revolving around an amiable and gentle old junk dealer who counterfeits crude one dollar bills only when he is in need of money to help others or to buy the bare necessities of life, the story has been expertly fashioned on every count, making for a mixture of comedy, tenderness and pathos that tugs at one's heartstrings all the way through.

Edmund Gwenn, as the gentle old counterfeiter, is superb; he so endears himself to the audience by the kindness he shows to others and by his fondness for children that one finds himself hoping that the authorities will not catch up with him. There is considerable suspense and comedy as a result of the narrow escapes the old man has unwittingly as the Treasury agents try to track him down. And there is much humor in the fact that the agents continually crack big counterfeiting rings with apparent ease, yet remain completely baffled by Gwenn's operations because of the fact that he confines himself to counterfeiting one dollar bills and does not print more than twenty-five of them every few months. An amusing twist to the story has Burt Lancaster, the Government agent in charge of the case, meeting and falling in love with Dorothy McGuire, a pretty neighbor of Gwenn's, and under these circumstances Lancaster becomes friendly with Gwenn but hasn't the remotest idea that he is the man he is searching for. An hilarious sequence is where Lancaster accompanies Dorothy, Gwenn and several neighborhood kids to Coney Island, where Gwenn takes the children on different amusement rides, blithely changing one dollar bills under Lancaster's nose. The romantic interest between Dorothy and Lancaster is charming and refreshing.

Some of the situations are most touching, such as the one where Lancaster finally uncovers Gwenn as the counterfeiter and the old man admits his guilt. A heart-tugging sequence, one that will be long remembered, takes place in the courtroom, where the authorities, recognizing that Gwenn is not a criminal in a true sense, intercede with the judge to give him the lightest possible sentence of four months and a fine of one dollar. The picture ends on an hilarious note when Gwenn, inadvertently, pulls a bogus dollar bill out of his pocket to pay the fine. The title stems from the fact that 880 is the number of Gwenn's case in the Secret Service files.

It was produced by Julian Blaustein and directed by Edmund Goulding from a screen play by Robert Riskin, based on an article in the *New Yorker* by St. Clair McKelway. The cast includes Millard Mitchell, Minor Watson and others.

Excellent for the family.

**"My Blue Heaven" with Betty Grable
and Dan Dailey**

(20th Century-Fox, Sept.; time, 96 min.)

A thoroughly entertaining Technicolor musical, with Betty Grable and Dan Dailey, as a happily married song-and-dance team, cast in the type of roles the great mass of movie-goers enjoy seeing them in. The story is lightweight, but it is enjoyable, for it is heart-warming, appealing and comical, and has a lively pace. Musically, it is more than satisfying; the songs are melodious and the singing is pleasant to the ear. The production, of course, is lavish and, needless to say, Miss Grable, in fetching costumes and clothes, is easy on the eyes. Set this one down as a pleasant Technicolor package of music and sentiment that cannot miss at the box-office, for it is geared to the popular taste:—

Successful in show business and happily married, Betty and Dailey are overjoyed when they learn that she has

become an expectant mother. They are heartbroken when Betty, involved in an accident, loses the unborn baby and is told that in all probability she will never have another. When they learn that David Wayne and Jane Wyatt, their writers, had adopted two children, Betty and Dailey apply at a foundling home and, after months of investigation, are given a baby for adoption. The supervisor of the foundling home accompanies them back to their apartment with the baby and, upon their arrival, they find a wild party in progress, hurriedly arranged by Wayne to welcome the baby. The supervisor frowns on such shenanigans and takes back the baby. To make up for his blunder, Wayne arranges for Betty and Dailey to adopt another baby, but without benefit of legal sanction. Betty becomes so attached to the child that she decides to give up show business to be with the infant all the time. But she soon changes her mind when she finds reason to suspect that Mitzi Gaynor, Dailey's new dancing partner, had designs on him. One night, while at the television studio, Betty and Dailey receive a message that the child had been taken back by its mother, and that they had no recourse because they had not adopted the child legally. Months later, the couple's spirits rise again when the supervisor of the foundling home changes her attitude and gives them another baby. At this point, Wayne arrives with news that the mother who had taken back the baby now wanted to return the child for good. Overjoyed, Betty faints. A doctor is called and he promptly announces that she is an expectant mother once again.

It was produced by Sol C. Siegel and directed by Henry Koster from a screen play by Lamar Trotti and Claude Binyon, based on a story by S. K. Lauren.

Fine for the family.

**"The Toast of New Orleans" with
Kathryn Grayson, Mario Lanza
and David Niven**

(MGM, September; time, 98 min.)

A highly diverting musical comedy, lavishly produced and splashed with the brightest of Technicolor hues. The operatic type of music, as sung by Kathryn Grayson and Mario Lanza, should thrill the lovers of classical music. For those who are not particularly keen about high class music, the story offers considerable merriment in its depiction of the rise of Lanza from a brash fisherman to an opera star, and of his romantic pursuit of Miss Grayson, an established star. Much laughter is provoked by the embarrassment he causes her in a fashionable restaurant because of his crude manners, and by his subsequent schooling in the social graces. Very good comedy relief is provided by J. Carrol Naish, as Lanza's uncouth uncle. The action takes place in New Orleans at the turn of the century:—

En route to New Orleans to keep an operatic engagement, Kathryn, accompanied by David Niven, her manager and fiance, stops off at a small Louisiana village to sing at a fishermen's festival. Lanza, a rugged young fisherman who had an eye for the ladies and who loved to sing, joins Kathryn in a duet against her will. Niven, impressed by Lanza's voice, offers to train him for an operatic career. When he loses his boat in a squall, Lanza, accompanied by Naish, his uncle, goes to New Orleans to accept Niven's offer. He is started immediately on a voice training program. Kathryn shuns him because of his crude manners, but Lanza proceeds to woo her despite her antagonism, and cleverly maneuvers her into a spot whereby she undertakes to teach him the social graces. Lanza learns to sing quickly, and before long is acclaimed as a top star. But he decides to give up his career when he learns that Kathryn and Niven are engaged. Niven, aware that Kathryn had fallen in love with Lanza in spite of herself, solves her problem by gracefully stepping out of her romantic life.

It was produced by Joe Pasternak and directed by Norman Taurog from an original screen play by Sy Gomberg and George Wells.

Good for the family.

**"Born to Be Bad" with Joan Fontaine,
Robert Ryan, Joan Leslie and Zachary Scott**
(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 94 min.)

"Born to Be Bad" is endowed with a good cast and with dressy production values, but as entertainment it is quite ordinary. Revolving around a beautiful but unscrupulous woman who conceals her avariciousness behind a winsome smile of innocence, the story is familiar and superficial, and is certainly not worthy of the players' talents. There is nothing real about the characters, and a number of the situations, intended as dramatic, will undoubtedly cause many movie-goers to titter. Neither Joan Fontaine, as the crafty woman, nor the other players are given much of a chance by the pat script as well as by some of the dialogue. The choppy editing does not help matters:—

When Joan becomes engaged to marry Zachary Scott, a wealthy socialite, Harold Vermilyea, her employer, sends for Joan Fontaine, his niece, to take her place as his secretary. Miss Leslie agrees to share her apartment with Miss Fontaine while the latter attends business school to fit herself for the job. Soon after she meets Scott, Miss Fontaine sets out to captivate him, even though she finds herself attracted to Robert Ryan, a struggling novelist. She manages to fool Scott with an assumed sweetness and, through crafty maneuvering, wins him away from Miss Leslie and marries him. The marriage, however, does not go well, for she cannot pretend to love Scott while her emotional self is centered upon Ryan. Aware of her feeling for Ryan, Scott, in a desperate effort to preserve the marriage, takes her on a second honeymoon. She slips away at the first opportunity to see Ryan in San Francisco, leaving a note to the effect that she had gone to see a sick aunt. Ryan, very much in love with her, insists that they tell Scott the truth and that she obtain a divorce, but she rejects the suggestion because of Scott's wealth. Now seeing her for what she is, Ryan, disgusted, breaks with her. Having lost Ryan, Miss Fontaine hurries home to hold on to Scott, but he, too, gives her the air, for he had learned the truth about her infidelity with Ryan. Scott divorces her and makes up with Miss Leslie, while Miss Fontaine continues on her merry way, amassing wealth and social position as she makes conquest after conquest with her sweet smile of innocence.

It was produced by Robert Sparks and directed by Nicholas Ray from a screen play by Edith Sommer, based on the novel "All Kneeling," by Anne Parrish. The cast includes Mel Ferrer and others.

Strictly adult fare.

**"Outrage" with Mala Powers
and Tod Andrews**

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 75 min.)

Grim and unpleasant program fare. It can hardly be called an entertainment, for the story deals with the criminal rape of an innocent young girl about to be married, and with the psychological effect the experience has upon her. Credit is due Collier Young, the producer and Ida Lupino, the director, for handling the delicate theme in the best possible taste; nevertheless, the subject matter remains distasteful and depressing, and its dramatic points are, for the most part, made in the form of a preachment. The principal players, though unknown, are capable. The pace is generally slow:—

Mala Powers, an office worker in a mid-Western city, lives with her parents and is happy in her engagement to Robert Clarke. Leaving the office late one night, she is stalked by a scar-faced degenerate who overpowers and rapes her in a deserted truck yard. She arrives home dazed and hysterical, and is unable to identify her attacker to the police. The sympathy of Clarke and of her parents, and the curious stares of the neighbors, become intolerable to Mala; she runs away from home, assumes another name, and heads for California by bus. When she hears a radio broadcast about her disappearance, Mala leaves the bus and continues

on foot. She sprains her ankle and falls unconscious by the roadside, where she is found by Tod Andrews, a young clergyman, who takes her to a neighboring orange ranch. There she obtains a job packing oranges. To help her make new friends, Andrews persuades Mala to attend a dance at the ranch. During the affair, one of the ranch hands tries to kiss her, and Mala, re-living her terrifying experience, strikes him with a wrench, seriously injuring him. She flees in panic, but Andrews brings her back, and she is arrested. At the court hearing, the facts about her past come to light. The ranch hand refuses to press charges, and the judge agrees to dismiss her provided she undergoes psychiatric treatment for a period of one year. Andrews convinces the court that it would be best for her to return home to her parents and Clarke, to be treated there. Mala, influenced by Andrews, returns home with new courage to rebuild her life.

It is a Filmmakers production, written for the screen by Collier Young, Malvin Wald and Ida Lupino.

Strictly adult fare.

**"Walk Softly, Stranger" with Valli
and Joseph Cotten**

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 81 min.)

A mixture of melodrama and a strange romance between a thieving gambler and a wealthy, beautiful invalid, "Walk Softly, Stranger" misses fire because of a loosely-written, foggy script. At best, it is no more than moderately interesting, for the picture lacks coherence and clear-cut motivations. The story, as presented, gives one the impression that a studied attempt has been made to break away from a standard gangster formula, but the result is a cryptic pattern that tends to puzzle the spectator. In spite of its frequent vagueness, the film has some arresting moments, and the calibre of the acting is good:—

Arriving in a small Ohio town, Joseph Cotten goes to the home of Spring Byington, a widow. He tells her that he had lived in the house as a boy, and persuades her to rent him a room. That evening he goes to a fashionable country club, where he meets Valli, daughter of Frank Puglia, the town's richest man, and tells her that years previously, as a newsboy, he had been madly in love with her. Valli, crippled by a skiing accident, feels herself an outcast and takes an interest in Cotten. This pleases her father, who offers Cotten an executive position in his shoe factory, but Cotten declines in favor of a less important job in the factory's shipping department, which he had obtained through Miss Byington's efforts. Cotten's attitude fascinates Valli, and a strong friendship grows up between them. Several months later, Cotten makes a week-end trip to a large city, where he meets Paul Stewart, an old pal. There, the pair speedily carry out a long-planned hold-up of a gambling joint owned by Howard Petrie, netting themselves \$100,000. They divide the loot, and Cotten returns to Ohio, where he resumes his life of respectability and keeps on with his job, presumably as part of his plan to eventually marry Valli for her money. His attitude changes, however, when he realizes that he is really in love with her. Complications arise when Stewart, broke, arrives in town for a loan and is trailed there by two of Petrie's henchmen, who kill him. Cotten, knowing that he cannot escape, goes to Valli and confesses the truth about his criminal career, then joins Petrie's henchmen, who take him to the gambler. As Petrie takes him for a "last ride," Cotten, in desperation, attacks the driver, causing the car to crash into a ditch. Petrie and the driver are killed, and Cotten injured and taken to a hospital. Valli visits him before the police take him to jail and promises to wait for him.

It was produced by Robert Sparks and directed by Robert Stevenson from a screen play by Frank Fenton, based on a story by Manny Seff and Paul Yawitz. The cast includes Jeff Donnell, John McIntire and others.

Adult fare.

"Shakedown" with Howard Duff, Brian Donlevy and Peggy Dow

(Univ.-Int'l, Sept.; time, 80 min.)

A fairly interesting but unpleasant crime melodrama, of program grade. The unpleasantness is brought about by the fact that the gangster-like story centers around a "heel," a coldblooded newspaper photographer who rises to the top of his profession by cheating, double-crossing and blackmailing. Moreover, most of the characters are unsympathetic. The action is fairly exciting in a superficial way. Howard Duff is capable as the ruthless photographer; he acts the part with realism. Brian Donlevy, as a suave gangster, and Lawrence Tierney, as his rival, are acceptable in standard characterizations. Peggy Dow, as the sympathetic picture editor who is deceived by Duff, is effective:—

Duff, an ambitious but unemployed photographer, manages to obtain a trial job on a San Francisco paper through the efforts of Peggy Dow, the photo editor, despite the misgivings of Bruce Bennett, the managing editor. By disregarding ethics, and by taking advantage of Peggy's affection for him, Duff becomes the paper's top photographer. He becomes friendly with Donlevy, a suave racketeer, who tips him off to a robbery planned by Tierney, a rival gangster, and gives him \$1,000 to snap a picture of the crime in order to bring about Tierney's arrest. Duff gets the picture, but instead of giving it to his paper he uses it to blackmail Tierney. Attracted to Ann Vernon, Donlevy's wife, and seeking a clear field for her, Duff informs Tierney of how Donlevy had framed him, then joins him in a scheme whereby Donlevy is killed in a bomb explosion. Duff, "just passing by," gets a sensational picture of the killing, and as a result wins world-wide fame. He quits the paper despite Peggy's pleas, and makes a fortune free-lancing all over the world on special assignments. Meanwhile he continues to pursue Ann, but to no avail. Returning to San Francisco, Duff gets an assignment to photograph a society ball and cooks up a scheme whereby he compels Tierney and his gang to agree to rob the guests of their jewels, giving him half of the loot. Tired of Duff's blackmailing methods, Tierney goes to Ann and proves to her that Duff had been responsible for her husband's death. At the ball, Ann tries to shoot Duff. He escapes, only to be wounded mortally by Tierney, but as he drops Duff presses a camera shutter and gets a perfect picture of his killer.

It was produced by Ted Richmond and directed by Joe Pevney from a screen play by Alfred Lewis Levitt and Martin Goldsmith, based on a story by Nat Dalling and Don Martin. Adult fare.

"When You're Smiling" with Jerome Courtland and Frankie Laine

(Columbia, Sept. 21; time, 75 min.)

Just a routine comedy with music, best suited for the lower-half of a double bill. The picture will appeal chiefly to those who enjoy "swing" music regardless of story values, for it features a number of radio and recording artists, including Frankie Laine, Bob Crosby, the Mills Brothers, The Modernaires, Kay Starr and Billy Daniels. Except for Frankie Laine, who plays a small part in the story, the others are spotted here and there in different song routines, which give the picture its most entertaining moments. The story itself is very ordinary, and what there is in the way of comedy is pretty weak. The production values are modest:

Jerome Cowan, owner of a recording company, is constantly in financial straits because of his gambling on horses, and he seeks to marry off Margo Woode, his daughter, to a wealthy man who can be counted on to invest in the firm. As Margo prepares to return home from a Texas dude ranch, she meets Jerome Courtland, a young Texan, who tells her that he has ambitions to be a singer and that he needed a "break." Through information she receives from a ranch hand, Margo gets a false impression that Courtland is a millionaire and, when she arrives home and tells her father about him, Cowan wires the young man to come east immediately for his big opportunity. Cowan, through Courtland, hoped to raise \$100,000 he owed to Robert Shayne, a bookmaker, who threatened to take over the recording

company as payment. Upon arrival, Courtland, unaware that everyone believed him to be a millionaire, is given a job in the office so that he can be around for Margo to entice him into marriage. Lola Albright, the receptionist, becomes romantically interested in him, and when he tells her of his desires to sing she takes him into the studio to record his voice. Both flee when they hear Cowan approach with Shayne. To pacify Shayne's demands for payment, Cowan tells him of his plan to marry Margo to Courtland for his money. Their conversation is recorded on Courtland's record, which Lola had neglected to take off the turntable. In the complicated events that follow, the record gets into the hands of Collette Lyons, a shrewd agent, who not only recognizes Courtland's superior singing voice but also learns of Cowan's scheme to mulct the young man. Her maneuvers bring out the truth about Cowan's intentions and about Courtland's true financial status. It all ends with Courtland getting a contract to sing while free to pursue his budding romance with Lola. Meanwhile Shayne, now attracted by Margo, tears up her father's notes.

It was produced by Jonie Taps and directed by Joseph Santley from a screen play by Karen DeWolf and John R. Roberts. Harmless for the family.

"Saddle Tramp" with Joel McCrea and Wanda Hendrix

(Univ.-Int'l, September; time, 77 min.)

A satisfactory Technicolor western. What it lacks in fast, hard-riding action is more than made up for in the human appeal of the story, which has a carefree cowboy finding himself saddled with the responsibility of providing for four orphaned boys, as well as a comely young miss who had run away from the home of her mean uncle. As written, the screenplay is a bit too pat, but it provides numerous chuckles and manages to hold one's interest throughout. Worked into the proceedings is a cattle rustling plot, which makes for several exciting fist-fights between the hero and the villains. Joel McCrea gives a good account of himself as the genial footloose cowboy, and Wanda Hendrix is appealing as the pretty heroine:—

Casually making his way to California, McCrea stops to visit John Ridgley, an old buddy who owned a small ranch in Nevada, whose wife had died recently, leaving him with four young sons. Ridgley borrows McCrea's horse to do a chore and is killed accidentally when the horse throws him. Feeling responsible for his friend's death, McCrea loads the ranch furnishings and the youngsters on a wagon and moves on, intending to provide for them until such a time as he can leave them with the proper authorities. He finds a job at a ranch owned by John McIntire, an irascible man who hated children, causing McCrea to keep the youngsters hidden in the woods. Each night he steals food and takes it to the children. McCrea's disappearances every night cause friction between him and John Russell, the ranch foreman, who intimates that McCrea may be in the pay of Antonio Moreno, a neighboring rancher, whom McIntire accused of stealing his cattle. Moreno, in turn, believed the same of McIntire. Returning to the children's camping site one night, McCrea finds Wanda, who had run away from the home of Ed Begley, her mean uncle. He permits her to stay with the children, and they become deeply attached to each other. In the course of events, McCrea is suspected of cattle rustling by McIntire, but through information given him by the children he discovers that the cattle was being stolen by Peter Leeds, Moreno's foreman, and Michael Steele, a McIntire cowpoke, who had covered their activities by pitting the ranch owners against each other. McCrea confronts the two men and is overpowered by them. Wanda learns of McCrea's predicament and, together with the children, rides to the McIntire ranch for help, arriving in time to prevent a gun battle between Moreno's and McIntire's forces. The two ranchers join forces and go to McCrea's rescue. It ends with McCrea and Wanda marrying and settling down with a readymade family.

It was produced by Leonard Goldstein and directed by Hugo Fregonese from a story and screen play by Harold Shumate.

Good for the family.

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1950

No. 35

THE FILM RENTAL PROBLEM

As a result of a series of regional meetings held during the past few weeks in Iowa, South Dakota and Nebraska, officials of the Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Iowa and Nebraska have concluded that the film companies are now selling the small-town theatres on an all-flat rental basis but that there are numerous complaints about the methods used by the companies in arriving at those flat rentals.

Some exhibitors, according to an Iowa-Nebraska statement, say that their flat rentals are unfair because they are based, either on the earnings of former outstanding pictures that were played on a percentage basis, or on grosses reported during the lush days.

The statement, which was sent to all sales managers, declared that "the distributors, keeping in mind the best interests of the stockholders of the various film companies, should maintain their volume of business up and, also to keep some theatres in operation, should immediately recognize that the exhibitor is entitled to a profit commensurate with the grossing possibilities of the theatres.

"The '1-A' towns, those grossing under \$500 per week, should have as a profit the same amount of money as the theatre pays film rental. No sane-thinking distributor can truthfully claim that an exhibitor is not justly entitled to a \$30 profit to feed and clothe his family if he grosses only \$60 above his overhead and pays a \$30 film rental.

"The same holds true on various levels of grossing in this '1-A' theatre classification and other problem houses."

Another organization that has been carrying on a consistent drive for more equitable film rental terms for exhibitors "who live on the wrong side of the tracks" is North Central Allied. After conducting a series of regional meetings throughout the North Central territory, Benjamin N. Berger, the organization's fiery president, had this to say in part in a recent message to his membership:

"At all these meetings we heard only one cry: That the distributors are unwilling to listen to reason, that they are getting more money for their pictures than they ever received in the history of this business, in spite of the fact that business at the box-office is on the downgrade, and theatre operating costs are on the upgrade. Pictures which were heretofore placed in the third or fourth bracket, are now put in the first or second bracket. The film companies have released more percentage pictures in the last several months than they have for quite some time heretofore. The demands of the exhibitors at these various meetings were that the organization devise ways and means of

retaliation against the distributors for their present rough-shod attitude."

All the other Allied units, as well as the organizations that make up the Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners, have been carrying on a relentless fight against excessive film rental terms demanded of the smaller-grossing theatres, and there is no doubt that their efforts have brought some measure of relief to a great number of small exhibitors. But, no matter how much aid the hard-pressed exhibitor receives through the efforts of his organization, the problem of excessive film rentals will always confront him, and to combat this problem successfully he must help himself. The exhibitor must always bear in mind that, if he is to remain solvent, business prudence requires that he operate his theatre on a system so that he will at all times know what he is doing and why he is doing it instead of just guessing as he goes along. This means that he must analyze his overhead costs periodically so that he may operate his theatre on a set budget, using it as a gauge for buying film at prices that will leave him with a deserving profit.

Along these lines, the Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana gave some sound advice to its membership in a recent organization bulletin, which stated that, "even though ATOI and National Allied can assist in many ways, ultimately the relief from high percentages, inordinate flat rental demands and unsound allocations must be secured by the efforts and resolve of each individual theatre owner. He must make a careful analysis to determine an accurate profit and loss statement for each company, and when terms are offered that are unfair beyond his ability to pay the exhibitor must learn to say 'no.'"

The bulletin then offered the following five-point formula for determining top flat film rental:

1. Determine the actual amount of your weekly overhead expenses, exclusive of feature film rental. (Editor's Note: A simplified form to help exhibitors obtain a breakdown of their overhead expenses was published in the January 14, 1950 issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS, under the heading, "A Guide to Theatre Budget Control." If this issue is missing from your files, a copy may be had on request.)

2. Divide the total of your weekly expenses into tenths, charging three-tenths off for Sunday, two-tenths for Saturday, and one-tenth for each of the other days of the week. To be more accurate, you may break down this overhead in relation to the average business that you actually do on each day of the week so that the overhead is loaded on to each change in accordance with the ability of the average gross on that change to carry it.

(Continued on back page)

"Triple Trouble" with the Bowery Boys

(Monogram, August 13; time, 66 min.)

A fair "Bowery Boys" comedy-melodrama. The trouble with it is the fact that the story is unbelievable. For example, Leo Gorcey and Huntz Hall plead guilty to a robbery charge so that, by going to jail, they might uncover the criminals who had been communicating with the outside world by means of a short-wave radio. It might have been made believable if Gorcey had persuaded the judge to stay their sentencing until they were given a chance to catch the guilty persons in the penitentiary. Thus they would have had the aid of the prison authorities. The direction and acting are acceptable, considering the weakness of the story:—

While returning from a party still wearing masks, Gorcey and his gang witness a warehouse robbery. Their attempt to capture the crooks is unsuccessful and, when the police arrive and find them there, they suspect them of the robbery and arrest them, despite their pleas of innocence. The boys appeal to Gabriel Dell, their friend, who had just opened up an office as an attorney-at-law. Dell accepts the case and effects their release to await trial. One of the boys (William Benedict), a short-wave radio fan, picks up information that leads him to believe that the crooks had been communicating with other crooks in the penitentiary as to what warehouse to rob each time. Gorcey and Hall decide to plead guilty so that, by being imprisoned, they may discover the identity of the crooks. Arriving at the prison, the boys pose as hardened criminals from Detroit. They soon meet Pat Collins, leader of the criminal gang in prison, and learns that he is sending to Effie Laird, his mother, leader of the outside gang, a message by a concealed short-wave radio as to the gang's intention to break jail. Benedict intercepts the message and informs the police. Meanwhile, Collins discovers that Gorcey and Hall are "imposters," and forces them to join the jail break. Once outside the prison walls, the criminals are surrounded by the guards and captured. Thus Gorcey and his gang prove their innocence.

The picture was produced by Jan Grippio, and directed by Jean Yarbrough, from a screen play by Charles R. Marion. Unobjectionable for the family.

"The Showdown" with William Elliott, Walter Brennan and Marie Windsor

(Republic, August 15; time, 86 min.)

Good. It is a better-than-average western melodrama that should more than satisfy the followers of this type of entertainment. Not only does it contain all the action desired in a western, but it has an interesting story that grips one's attention throughout because of a touch of mystery that is not solved until the finish. William Elliott, as an ex-Texas Ranger seeking to avenge his brother's murder, is excellent in a forceful characterization, and there is considerable suspense and thrills in his efforts to detect and bring the guilty person to justice. The other players, too, are very good. The capable direction by Dorrell and Stuart McGowan, who also wrote the effective screen play, has given the film an exciting tempo:—

Learning that his brother had been killed and robbed of the money he had given him to buy a ranch, Elliott arrives in an Arizona cattle town to track down the killer. He becomes convinced that the murder had been committed by one of the cowhands employed by Walter Brennan, a genial cattleman. The cowhands resent Elliott's accusation and gang up on him in a saloon owned by Marie Windsor, but Brennan intervenes in time to save him from harm. When Brennan offers him a job to lead a cattle drive to Montana, Elliott accepts, figuring that he will have an opportunity to find the killer among the men. Marie, having bought a share of the herd, goes along on the drive. As trail-boss, Elliott drives the men relentlessly to get the herd to Montana before the snow flies. The men hate him, and several revolt against him as he ruthlessly pursues his campaign to uncover the killer. Brennan begs Elliott to forget revenge and tries to convince him that natural

retribution will take care of the murderer, but Elliott refuses to listen to his preaching. He suspects everyone, but from time to time he finds reason to clear one of them of suspicion. Fate steps in towards the finish when Brennan, gored by a mad steer and knowing that he will die, confesses that he is the killer and begs Elliott to shoot him to put him out of his misery. Elliott refuses to shoot, and insists that Brennan be left on the trail to suffer and die alone. But at the last minute his desire for revenge fades, and he permits the others to aid Brennan, knowing full well that the old man would soon become the victim of the retribution he had been preaching.

The screen play is based upon an Esquire Magazine story by Richard Wormser and Dan Gordon. It was produced by William J. O'Sullivan.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Mr. Music" with Bing Crosby, Nancy Olson and Charles Coburn

(Paramount, December; time, 113 min.)

Although this is not one of Bing Crosby's better musical pictures, it makes for pleasant and relaxing entertainment all the way through, in spite of the fact that it is overlong and has some dull stretches. The story is lightweight, but this is incidental since the entertainment values stem from the amusing situations, the glib dialogic and, of course, Crosby's singing. Also on the plus side are guest appearances by Groucho Marx, Dorothy Kirsten, Peggy Lee, Marge and Gower Champion, and the Merry Macs—all appear with Crosby in different musical routines in a show staged at the finish. As a successful music composer who is broke because he would rather loaf than work, Crosby is cast in the type of role his fans will enjoy seeing him in, for it suits his charm and personality. Nancy Olson, as a prim secretary who is hired by Crosby's producer to see that he keeps on working, is exceptionally good, as is Ida Moore, who is highly comical as Nancy's flighty aunt. The songs are melodious, but not one is of the sort that remains in one's mind:—

Crosby, preferring to enjoy life and relax, disregards the pleas of Charles Coburn, his producer-friend, to resume his song-writing. Crosby soon finds himself in debt and goes to Coburn for a \$15,000 advance on an unwritten show. To make sure that Crosby will keep his promise to start work, Coburn engages Nancy, a college student, as secretary for Crosby, and gives her the money with instructions to pay Crosby's essential bills so long as he keeps composing. Nancy moves into Crosby's swank apartment with her aunt as chaperone, and her rigid control of his funds soon compels him to start work seriously. She inspires him, and before long he turns out a fine musical score. Meanwhile Nancy finds herself falling in love with Crosby, but he, presuming that she is in love with Robert Stack, a brash college athlete, showers his attentions on Ruth Hussey, a glamorous sophisticate, whose affections are measured by the size of a man's pocketbook. Complications arise when Coburn, whose last three productions had been failures, is unable to obtain backing for Crosby's musical. Financing is offered to Crosby direct, but his loyalty to Coburn is so intense that he refuses to do the show without him. To overcome the difficulties, Crosby, aided by Nancy, arranges for the college to stage the show and calls upon his friends in the entertainment world to lend their talents. The prospective backers invited to the show like it, but they still refuse to back it unless Coburn is removed. Crosby refuses to bow to their demands, and the situation is saved when Nancy's aunt shows up with an eccentric elderly boy-friend who puts up the needed funds. It all ends on a happy note when Crosby realizes that he is in love with Nancy.

It was produced by Robert L. Welch and directed by Richard Haydn from a screen play by Arthur Sheekman, suggested by a play by Samson Raphaelson. The cast includes Tom Ewell, Donald Woods and others.

Suitable for the family.

**"Three Secrets" with Eleanor Parker,
Patricia Neal and Ruth Roman**
(Warner Bros., Oct. 14; time, 98 min.)

An interesting and unusual adult mother-love drama. Women in particular should find it appealing, for it revolves around the emotional reactions of three young women, complete strangers, each of whom fears that an adopted five-year-old boy hurt in an airplane disaster is the child each had given up secretly for adoption. It is a highly coincidental plot into which three separate flashback stories detailing the lives of the three women have been dovetailed, but the presentation is so artful and the emotional appeal so strong that one is prone to overlook the plot's implausibilities. The direction is expert, and the performances of the three female stars are very good, with each contributing a moving study without overshadowing the other.

The story opens with the crash of a private plane on an inaccessible mountain peak, and with the discovery that the youngster is the sole survivor, his foster parents having been killed. As a rescue party is formed, news of the boy's plight upsets Eleanor Parker, Patricia Neal and Ruth Roman, each of whom finds reason to believe that the trapped child is her own. All three had encountered each other briefly five years previously, when each on the same day had given up her child to the same adoption agency. The three meet again and recognize each other when they rush to the scene of the accident, and while they wait for the rescue party to complete its mission they reveal to each other the events that had clouded their lives. Eleanor, now happily married to Lief Erickson, reveals that her child had been the result of a war romance with a sailor. She had never told her husband about the child, and now felt that she must tell him the truth, because, if the injured boy proved to be hers, she must give him a home. Patricia, a sophisticated and successful newspaperwoman, reveals that her desire for a career had broken up her marriage to Frank Lovejoy, and two weeks after he had divorced her and had remarried, she had discovered that she was pregnant. For that reason she gave her son to the adoption home. Ruth, a showgirl just released from prison for manslaughter, reveals how she had killed her racketeer-lover when he tried to cast her aside, and how she had been compelled to give up her baby for adoption because she was a convict. As word comes that the rescue party had reached the boy, Eleanor's husband arrives and she tells him the truth. He immediately offers to treat the child as his own if he proves to be hers. Meanwhile Patricia, through her publisher, obtains conclusive evidence that the boy is Ruth's child. To safeguard the boy's future happiness, Ruth, with Patricia's approval, informs Eleanor, the only one of the three who is married, that the child is hers, and she sets out to adopt him when he is brought down from the mountain safely.

It was produced by Milton Sperling and directed by Robert Wise from an original screen play by Martin Rackin and Gina Kaus.

Strictly adult fare.

"Madeleine" with Ann Todd
(Univ.-Int'l. September; time, 101 min.)

Based on a true-life murder mystery that happened in Scotland in 1857, this British-made period drama has been given a quality production, distinguished direction and impressive acting. Class audiences may appreciate it, but its appeal to the masses is doubtful, for it is extremely slow-moving, somber and talkative. The dialogue, in fact, is so excessive that most picture goers will find it exhausting, particularly in the long drawn out courtroom scenes, which take up most of the second half of the picture. The ending is enigmatic in that the heroine, on trial for the murder of her unscrupulous clandestine lover, is let off on a verdict of "Not Proven," a verdict peculiar to Scottish law, thus the audience is left in doubt as to her guilt:—

Ann Todd, sheltered daughter of Leslie Banks, a prosperous but stern Glasgow merchant who dominated his

family, falls passionately in love with Ivan Desny, a handsome but unscrupulous young Frenchman, whom she meets secretly because he was far removed from her social circles. In due time Desny seduces her. Meanwhile Ann's father wants her to marry Norman Wooland, a socially eligible bachelor, and rather than incur her father's displeasure Ann allows Wooland to believe that she will one day become his wife. But when her father demands that she set a wedding date, Ann goes to Desny and asks him to elope with her immediately. He refuses on the ground that she would be cut off by her father without a penny, and demands that she win her father's sanction of their marriage so as to assure their financial security. Infuriated, Ann breaks with Desny and announces her intention to marry Wooland. Humiliated but persistent, Desny threatens to show Ann's father her intimate letters unless she introduces him to her family. To appease him, Ann permits Desny to resume his secret meetings with her, and shortly afterwards he becomes ill and dies of arsenical poisoning. Her illicit affair with Desny comes to light and, after inquiries by the authorities, who discover that she had made a purchase of arsenic, Ann is arrested and put on trial for Desny's murder. Despite the strong evidence against her, however, her lawyer defends her in so clever a manner that the jury reaches a verdict of "Not Proven," permitting her to go free.

It is a J. Arthur Rank presentation, produced by Stanley Haynes and directed by David Lean. Nicholas Phipps wrote the screen play in collaboration with Mr. Haynes.

Strictly adult fare.

**"The Return of Jesse James" with
John Ireland, Ann Dvorak and Henry Hull**
(Lippert, Sept. 8; time, 75 min.)

The exhibitor who will book this picture must depend on the title and on the business "I Shot Jesse James" did when either he or his competitor played it, for the story is weak and not as exciting as the former pictures, in which John Ireland also played the leading part. One reason for the story's weakness is that the picture-goer is asked to follow the fate of a character who profits from the reputation of another. Moreover, Ann Dvorak is presented as a faithless woman. It lacks the action of the former "Jesse James" picture because of too much talk. There is, however, enough shooting to excite the followers of western melodramas. The photography is somewhat dark:—

Two years after the shooting of Jesse James, the famous outlaw, Ireland, a bank robber, joins forces with Henry Hull, a former member of the James' gang, who noticed that he (Ireland) had a close resemblance to James. Hull persuades Ireland to masquerade as James and, together with his henchmen, helps him to stage a series of holdups. The word soon spreads around that James is not dead, and that his brother Frank (played by Reed Hadley) was riding with him. Frank now living a respectable life in Tennessee under an assumed name, visits Hull and persuades him to put a stop to the holdups and to Ireland's masquerade. But Ann Dvorak, Hull's daughter, tells Ireland that he is a better man than James ever was, and, at her insistence, he continues the masquerade, committing many more holdups and killings. To stop the crimes, state officials distribute handbills offering amnesty to any one who will bring in Frank or Jesse James, dead or alive. Frank, realizing that Ireland had been following a pattern set by his brother in these holdups, concludes that Ireland will next hold up the bank in Westfield, Minnesota, and he goes there to alert the town officials. When the outlaws arrive, all are killed except Ireland, who is wounded seriously. He makes his way back to Ann, but she decides to leave him when she learns that he had brought no money. He shoots and kills her as he is dying. Frank returns to Tennessee a free man.

Carl K. Hittleman wrote the original story and produced it. Jack Nanteford wrote the screen play, and David Hilton directed it.

Strictly an adult picture.

3. Separately figure the average gross on each company's figures on each change for a period of one year. If for some particular reason there has been a change in the general level of business in your situation use a period of time that gives a more accurate indication of today's conditions. For companies that you do not buy, or for companies from which you have used only a few pictures, take the overall average gross on the change.

4. From the average gross of each company on each change deduct the proper units (tenths) of overhead. From the balance, of course, must come your film rental and profit. It is up to each exhibitor to determine for himself what constitutes a fair profit. After providing for profit the remaining amount should be the exhibitor's top rental.

5. You naturally won't realize the same profit on all bookings and inevitably some will be a loss. But this procedure will yield a fair overall profit. On companies from which you play percentage pictures, such pictures should not be included in your calculation of average gross. It is apparent that such returns would bring up your average but because the film company shares in the unusually high gross you do not retain enough share of this gross to provide a cushion for the weaker pictures that fall below the average. Each percentage picture must then be negotiated for at terms that permit profitable exhibition of the individual feature.

The ATOI then takes up the subject of allocations with this declaration:

"Off hand we'll guess that three out of four exhibitors who complain about excessive film rentals say that it is the result of misallocations. National Allied plans to expand its reviewing service so that exhibitors will have a better indication of proper allocations than overly charitable trade paper reviews, enthusiastic claims of salesmen or exaggerated advertising copy. Unless little acorns are stepped on and squashed they become big oaks that are hard to hack away is proved by the fact that these bulletins warned about the slight of hand being done with allocations more than three years ago. With picture after picture being allocated in the top brackets exhibitors are hard pressed to find reasonably good product for their mid-week changes where the potentialities simply don't exist to come out on 1 and 2 bracket pictures. That is probably why regular movie-goers don't all agree that 'movies are betetr than ever.'

"After an exhibitor has determined his proper flat allocations we recommend that he religiously stick to them. No salesman has such amazing foresight that he can predict that a picture is 'half way between second and third bracket' or worth 30% more than regular second bracket terms. When attention is no longer paid to the guideposts of brackets an exhibitor has no way of knowing whether by some magic foresight he is getting a picture worth 30% more than his second bracket or, what is more likely, that his second bracket has been eased up 30%. As a last resort it would be better to deal at the next higher regular bracket because then you will at least know what is happening to your deals and are in a position to justly ask reallocation if the picture fails. You may be told that the company no longer sells according to brackets but only according to what each individual picture is worth. In spite of that sales talk you can be sure that the distributor still carries specific allocations for each situation in his own records. He needs

these slots in order to set up deals for all of his 10,000 or more possible accounts.

"However you may arrive at what is a fair price for a picture, when you can't make that kind of a deal learn to say 'no'. To the exhibitor who feels that he 'just has to book' some particular picture, we ask the question asked by Art Rush: 'And what would you have done if Hollywood never had made that picture?'"

"Lonely Heart Bandits" with Dorothy Patrick and John Eldredge (Republic, August 29; time, 60 min.)

A minor program "quickie" that may get by with those who are not too demanding in their choice of entertainment. Discriminating audiences, however, will probably be bored, for the story, which revolves around the exploits of a married couple who operate a "lonely hearts" racket and fleece lovelorn but gullible people of their savings, is ordinary, lacks novelty of plot development, and is completely unconvincing. In spite of the fact that the picture has some melodramatic action, it fails to impress on any one count. The players try hard enough, but there is little they can do with the weak material:—

Tempted by the easy pickings in the lonely hearts racket, John Eldredge, a suave confidence man, joins forces with Dorothy Patrick, a glamorous woman well versed in the tricks of the trade, whom he marries. They rent a run-down farm in the mid-west and, posing as a widow and her brother, prepare to fleece a middle-aged farmer, whom Dorothy had lured there through lonely hearts letters. They steal the man's money and kill him when he puts up a fight. After fleecing several more victims, the couple concentrate their efforts on Ann Doran, a comely but lonely widow who, inspired by the success of a friend with a mail-order romance, had replied to one of Eldredge's lonely hearts advertisements. Eldredge arrives at Ann's home with Dorothy, whom he introduces as his sister, brought along for the purpose of keeping his visit respectable. Impressed by Eldredge's fine manners and show of wealth, Ann soon falls victim to his ardent love-making and smooth talk, and agrees to put up her home for sale so that they may leave on a round-the-world honeymoon trip he promises to her. Richard Travis, a life-long friend who loved Ann, mistrusts Eldredge and telegraphs Eric Sinclair, Ann's grown son in Saudi Arabia, to come home immediately. Learning of the son's threatened return, Dorothy takes Ann on a shopping trip to Chicago while Eldredge remains behind to collect the money from the sale of her property. Meanwhile, Dorothy disposes of Ann by pushing her off the rear platform of the moving train. Travis becomes aware of dirty work when he receives a greeting card from Ann but notices that it is not in her handwriting. He attempts to question Eldredge and is knocked unconscious by him. Eldredge flees town. This sets in motion a vast manhunt led by Travis and Sinclair, which ends with the police killing Eldredge and arresting Dorothy after a furious gun battle. Meanwhile Ann is found in a small country hospital, and upon her recovery she accepts Travis' proposal of marriage.

It was produced by Stephen Auer and directed by George Blair from a screen play written by Gene Lewis. The cast includes Barbra Fuller, Robert Rockwell and others.

Adult fare.

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No. 36

COMPO MOVES AHEAD

The creation of voluntary committees in every exchange area of the country to cooperate in the work of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations has been recommended in a resolution adopted unanimously by COMPO's Committee on Organization, under the chairmanship of Harry Brandt, at a meeting held on Wednesday of this week at the Astor Hotel in New York City.

The resolution reads as follows:

"Resolved that each exchange area be urged to set up at the earliest possible date a COMPO committee to cooperate in the work of the organization. In calling these meetings, all the various charter members of COMPO represented in the area should be included. If more than one state is served by the area, such states should be represented on the committee.

"The committee will select an area chairman, state chairmen where desired, theatre, distribution, publicity, and any other chairmen representing groups affiliated with the industry who may be invited to participate in COMPO activities.

"There will be no effort to suggest that exactly the same procedure be followed in the formation or operation of COMPO exchange area committees throughout the country. Complete local autonomy will be preserved."

The purpose of the Committee on Organization meeting was, not only to speed up the establishment of COMPO on a national basis, but also to head off any further action by local groups to organize themselves under a set-up that, though well-intentioned, may cause objections to be raised by certain of the groups represented in the area.

In Minneapolis, for example, a Northwest Motion Picture Committee for National Defense was formed last week to support COMPO's pledge of full support to the Government in the present emergency. Harry B. French, president of the Minnesota Amusement Company, was elected as permanent chairman of the newly-formed committee by its organizers, who set up the committee along the lines of the World War II Activities Committee. Objections to this set-up have been raised by Bennie Berger, president of North Central Allied, who, according to trade paper reports, claims that his organization was not consulted prior to the formation of this new committee and was, therefore, unprepared to vote for chairmen and committeemen. NCA has rejected the French committee on the ground that it has not been established in accordance with the procedure approved by COMPO, and it is asking exhibitors not to sign participation pledge cards sent out by the committee.

Under the resolution adopted by Compo's Committee on Organization, every group affiliated with the industry and represented in the area will be invited to the meeting and consulted before chairmen

and committeemen are selected so as to prevent any further possible dissension.

* * *

Elsewhere on the COMPO front, Arthur L. Mayer, executive vice-president, took initial steps in the building of a working staff for COMPO with the announcement this week that Robert W. Coyne has been appointed as Special Counsel to the organization, and that William Ainsworth, former president of National Allied, has been invited to act as Special Consultant to COMPO.

Mr. Mayer announced also that Dick Pitts, former motion picture critic of the Charlotte (N.C.) *Observer*, has been engaged as COMPO's editorial director.

Coyne, who was national field director of the U. S. Treasury's War Finance Division during World War II, and a former executive director of the Theatre Owners of America, has been associated with Ted Gamble's theatrical enterprises for the past few years. He will leave Gamble to devote his full time to the COMPO post.

As Special Consultant to COMPO, Ainsworth, if he accepts Mayer's bid, will confer with COMPO's operational staff in an advisory capacity during periodic visits to New York from his business headquarters in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Dick Pitts, who two years ago won industry-wide acclaim with his series of articles on "What's Right with Hollywood," will, like Coyne, serve COMPO on a full-time basis.

Mr. Mayer also announced the appointment of a special COMPO committee for cooperation with the State Department in connection with the Voice of America operation overseas. Its personnel, drawn from the three COMPO member groups directly concerned with the international scene, consists of Cecil B. DeMille, of the Motion Picture Industry Council, as chairman; Gunther Lessing, of the Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers; and Francis S. Harmon, of the Motion Picture Association. The function of the new committee will be to work with Assistant Secretary of State Edward W. Barrett and his associates on Voice of America program operations.

Meanwhile on Friday (Sept. 8) the COMPO Committee on Cooperation with the U. S. Government was scheduled to meet with President Truman at the White House, as well as with Dr. John R. Steelman, Assistant to the President, who has been designated as the Government's liaison with the motion picture industry, and Dallas Halverstadt, film section chief in Steelman's office.

The visit to the White House was to be preceded by a formal meeting of the committee, with the meeting to be resumed following the conference with the

(Continued on back page)

"The Sleeping City" with Richard Conte and Coleen Gray

(Univ.-Int'l, September; time, 84 min.)

Given a semi-documentary treatment and shot on actual locations in and around New York City's Bellevue Hospital, this is an interesting murder mystery melodrama. It does not, however, match the superior quality of "Naked City," as the trade paper ads would have you believe. The story, which revolves around a detective who poses as a doctor to unravel the murder of an interne, and who discovers an illicit traffic in narcotics in the process, is somewhat short on excitement, and one guesses the murderer's identity long before the finish, yet there is enough intrigue and suspense to grip one's attention throughout. The authentic hospital scenes and the realistic depiction of an interne's life and routine give the picture a fascinating quality. The direction and acting are good, as is the low-key photography:—

When efforts to solve the hospital murder of Hugh Reilly, an interne, prove fruitless, police inspector John Alexander assigns Richard Conte, of his confidential squad, to the case. Conte, having had some medical experience in the Army, poses as an interne and is assigned to the emergency ward, where Reilly had served, and there meets Coleen Gray, the ward nurse, who had been Reilly's sweetheart. When Alex Nicol, a moody interne, commits suicide because his meagre wages did not permit him to marry Peggy Dow, a student nurse, Conte learns that both Nicol and Reilly had been heavily in debt to Richard Taber, an elderly hospital elevator operator, who induced the internes to place horse race bets with him on credit. Suspicious, Conte starts to place bets with Taber and soon runs up a bill of several hundred dollars. Before long Taber confronts him with a demand for immediate payment, claiming that his (Taber's) bookie will resort to violence. Conte pleads that he hasn't got the money, and Taber suggests that he pay off the debt in morphine, which he could obtain with the cooperation of his ward nurse by signing a prescription for an emergency patient. Through clever detective work, Conte soon establishes that Coleen and Taber were working hand-in-hand, blackmailing the internes to carry on an illegal traffic in dope. In the end, he brings about Coleen's arrest and, to save his own life, kills Taber in a blazing gun duel.

It was produced by Leonard Goldstein and directed by George Sherman from a story and screenplay by Jo Eisinger. Adult fare.

"Rookie Fireman" with Bill Williams, Barton MacLane and Marjorie Williams

(Columbia, October; time, 63 min.)

A minor low-budget melodrama that will just about make the grade as a supporting feature on a mid-week double bill in secondary situations. It barely holds one's attention, for the story is hackneyed and the characterizations stereotyped. Moreover, it is sorely lacking in fast action and excitement, for most of the proceedings are confined to the four walls of a firehouse with a minimum of footage devoted to fire-fighting. Not much can be said for either the direction or the acting, but in fairness to the players it should be said that the cliché-ridden script didn't give them much of a chance:—

Richard Quine, an unwordly young man, and Bill Williams, a rough young merchant seaman, join a metropolitan fire department as trainees. Williams looked upon the fireman job merely as a meal-ticket until a dock strike is over. Shortly after both are assigned to an engine house, Cliff Clark, their kindly captain, is killed in a fire, and his place is taken by Barton MacLane, a stern, career fireman. Trouble brews immediately because MacLane had once been engaged to Marjorie Reynolds, wife of John Ridgely, one of the firemen under his command. Ridgely, insanely jealous, rightly suspected that his wife still preferred MacLane, but he was unaware that the affection was one-sided and that MacLane had been urging Marjorie to preserve her marriage. Meanwhile Williams, resentful of MacLane's rigid

discipline, becomes antagonistic towards him and plans to resign. Trouble really starts when Richard Benedict, a crooked fireman, cheats Williams in a forbidden game of cards and MacLane catches them in a fight. He censures Williams and discharges Benedict. Angered at MacLane, Benedict telephones Ridgely when he sees the captain with Marjorie. Actually, MacLane had met Marjorie to tell her that he will promote Ridgely if she will promise to stick to him. Ridgely, believing the worst, attempts to murder MacLane with an axe when both enter a burning building on the following day, but both are trapped by falling debris before he can swing. Williams, having witnessed the incident, rescues both men and is told by MacLane to forget what he had seen. The near tragedy brings about a complete understanding between Marjorie and Ridgely because of MacLane's forgiving nature. Williams, too, finds new respect for MacLane and, rather than return to sea, he decides to make firefighting a career, and to settle down with Gloria Henry, a pretty waitress, as his wife.

It was produced by Milton Feldman and directed by Seymour Friedman from a screenplay by Jerry Sackheim, based on a story by Harry Fried.

Harmless for the family.

"I Killed Geronimo" with James Ellison and Virginia Herrick

(Eagle Lion Classics, Sept.; time, 63 min.)

Despite the bad direction, "I Killed Geronimo" should go over well in theatres where fast action melodramas are liked, for the story is substantial and the action holds the spectator in tense suspense. The picture is by no means a "cheapy"; some of the scenes are big and impressive, and the attacking Indian groups are of formidable size, such as is found in big productions. It is too bad that the story was not handled by a director more experienced in this type of melodrama. The acting of James Ellison and Virginia Herrick is good, but that of the other characters is somewhat stilted and "hammy." The photography is not bad:—

When Geronimo (played by Chief Thunder Cloud), the dreaded Apache chief, leaves the reservation with his braves and starts plundering and killing white settlers, Army intelligence in Washington assigns James Ellison, a captain, to stop the flow of guns to the Indians. Ellison, posing as an outlaw, joins the gang of Ted Adams, a trader suspected of supplying guns to the Indians. When Adams loads three wagons with guns and ammunition for the Apache chief, Ellison passes the information to Myron Healy, another intelligence agent, but is overheard by Wesley Hudman, one of the gang. Ellison overpowers Hudman and arranges for his arrest, then rejoins the gang while Healy leaves to inform the Army about the shipment. En route to the rendezvous with Geronimo, the gang comes upon a burned out ranch and capture Virginia Herrick, who had tried to shoot them. She is bound and hidden in a wagon when Army troops, on reconnaissance, arrive on the scene. Finding nothing suspicious, the troops permit the gang to proceed, but later, as a result of a clue dropped by Ellison, the troops capture the gang and the wagons, rescuing Virginia. Ellison secretly arranges for the Army to allow Adams and himself to escape so as to keep the rendezvous with Geronimo. Meanwhile Hudman had escaped and had reported to Geronimo. Upon meeting Ellison, the wily Apache chief allows him to arrange a peace talk with the Army, then uses the occasion to launch a savage attack on the troops to recover the guns and ammunition. In the events that follow, Geronimo kills Adams for his failure and engages Ellison in a hand-to-hand battle, which ends in the death of the Indian chief when he falls upon his own knife. Having brought peace to the West, Ellison claims Virginia as his bride.

It was produced by Jack Schwarz and directed by John Hoffman from a story and screenplay by Sam Neuman and Nat Tanchuck.

Children should enjoy it immensely.

LET US MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT

Under the above heading, a powerful statement on what all freedom-loving people are faced with as a result of Russian aggression appeared in the August 30 issue of the Hollywood Reporter over the signature of ten of Hollywood's most prominent picture people, namely, Cecil B. de Mille, Y. Frank Freeman, Samuel Goldwyn, Louis B. Mayer, Joseph M. Schenck, Albert, Harry M. and Jack L. Warner, John Wayne and Darryl F. Zanuck.

The statement, which appeared in a two-page spread paid for by the signers, is so well written, so enlightening and so thorough that HARRISON'S REPORTS is reproducing it in full in the belief that it deserves the widest possible circulation. As a matter of fact, this paper believes that the exhibitors would do well to bring this statement to the attention of their local newspaper editors as an example of the fact that an important segment of Hollywood's top brass is awake to the responsibilities imposed on them by good citizenship.

The statement is as follows:

"The people of the United States, looking on at this war that has begun in Korea, appear to view it with about equal parts of fury, incredulity, confusion and frustration. It's a war we don't want and have tried in every way to avoid. Two world wars would seem to be enough. Now we have a third.

"But we do have it, and unless we win it we shall lose it—and if we lose it the earth, including the United States, will be governed from Moscow. The worst thing we can do at this moment is to take it for granted that we shall win. We can win only if we use our heads and hold nothing back, for the Russians have the jump on us. They are so confident that they hope not to have to fight us at all, but to run us ragged with minor engagements found by stooges all around their periphery till we are worn out and can put up only guerrilla resistance when taken over.

"Part of our confusion and frustration are caused by the fact that we have never been in a war like this one. This is not the first time our forces have been mauled at the beginning, but it is the first time when our enemies looked forward with confidence to the long pull. If we let it go that way, this war may last the rest of our lives, even the lives of those who are young. Russia counts on growing constantly stronger during the next thirty years. If we are harried by minor campaigns all over the world our economy and our morale are going to be subjected to such strains as they have never known. We shall have to put on stringent controls and we are going to have to do without a lot of things we've been used to if we're to produce the quantities of munitions and train the numbers of men needed for the almost predictable series of emergencies.

"The action in Korea shows us what would happen to us in the Pacific if Russia were to send her own forces against us. We could not hold Korea, we could not hold Japan, we could not hold the Philippines, we probably could not hold Alaska and perhaps not Hawaii. A recent discussion in the House of Commons exposed very frankly what would happen to Europe if Russia decided to march west. Eighty Russian divisions and four or five thousand tanks are mobilized and ready. Nothing could stop them before they reached the English Channel. There is only one reason why Russia has not already annexed our Pacific holdings and western Europe. She is afraid that if she makes open war on us we will drop atomic bombs. And we probably would. The world has no other reply to the enormous military machine Russia is holding over our heads.

"There are many honest men who are wondering whether anything we could win by a war would be worth the immense and prolonged sacrifices a war will certainly demand of us. But one steady look at the Politburo makes it obvious to any American that he could not endure existence in that vast concentration camp which is Russia and her satellites.

We know democracy is not perfect; it's only a political system which tries to give all its citizens a fair chance under rules of fair play. It's not perfect, but it's the best men have had so far and the Communist slave-state is probably the worst. There are conditions under which life is not worth living, and those are the exact conditions now offered by Russia to the rest of the earth. Living in a democracy we are prejudiced against violence and try to avoid trouble when we can, but the men of violence are marching their slaves against us again. We cannot accept what they offer. Weary of war though we are, it's better to fight.

"Ultimately we shall win. The atom bomb is still ours and is holding the Russians at their borders. Invention and thought, which are dead in Russia, are very much alive among us, and they will begin to find ways to defeat the massed power of slaves and steel. Every soldier in our army is a potential leader, every working brain is a potential leader of thought. We shall fight our way out of this trap, no matter how long it takes.

"But from now on, let us make no mistake about it: the war is on, the chips are down. Those among us who defend Russia or Communism are enemies of freedom and traitors to the United Nations and the United States. American soldiers are dying in a battle against slavery, against Russia's attempt to enslave mankind. Every man's house will be in a target area before this thing ends, whether we like it or not. The United Nations is on our side because Russia is at war with every nation that insists on being free. Fortunately our Government has seen the Russian danger, and knows full well how boldly and rapidly we must act if we, as a nation, are to come out of this conflict alive. It will make very heavy demands on us, and very soon. It will have to make them, and we shall have to give everything we have to defend our liberty. Well, let us give it, and let us give ourselves, till Russia too has been taught that our free world is more than a match for the world of Genghis Khan."

THREE NEW COMPO COMMITTEES APPOINTED

To cope effectively with requests and problems arising from the national emergency, Ned E. Depinet, COMPO president, announced this week the establishment of three new COMPO committees: a Screening Committee, Theatre Priorities Committee, and a Production and Distribution Priorities Committee.

The Screening Committee, composed exclusively of exhibitors, will pass upon all film submitted by government or private agencies for exhibition in connection with the war effort. Russell V. Downing was named to serve as chairman of this committee, with Rotus Harvey, William Namenson, Wilbur Snaper and Robert Wilby.

On the Theatre Priorities Committee are Si Fabian, chairman, Emanuel Frisch, Ben Shearer, Abram F. Myers and David Weinstock.

The Production and Distribution Priorities Committee consists of Marvin L. Faris, chairman, Francis S. Harmon and Lester W. Roth.

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President. Primary purpose of the meeting, according to Ned E. Depinet, COMPO president and ex-officio chairman of the committee, was to lay the groundwork for active operation of the committee and to develop the opening phases of COMPO's program of cooperation with the Government in the present crisis.

Members of the COMPO Committee on Cooperation include Ellis A. Arnall, president of SIMPP; Harry Brandt, president of ITOA; Leo Brecher, president of MMPTA; Roy Brewer, head of the AFL Film Council in Hollywood, and former chairman of the MPIC; Abel Green, of the Trade Press Publishers group; Rotus Harvey, chairman of PCCITO; Robert J. O'Donnell, ringmaster of Variety International; Samuel Pinanski, president of TOA; Ronald Reagan, president of the Screen Actors Guild; and Trueman T. Rembusch, president of National Allied.

Arthur L. Mayer, COMPO's executive vice-president, and Francis S. Harmon, secretary of the Cooperation Committee, will also attend the Washington parleys.

Pointing out that this will mark the first meeting of COMPO's Committee on Cooperation with the Government, Mr. Mayer said: "We do not yet know the nature or extent of activities which the Government will call upon us to perform for the war effort. But this much is certain. Whatever the requests, the motion picture industry was never more thoroughly mobilized—in organization and in spirit—to fulfill them."

To carry out the vast program laid out for it, COMPO this week set in motion the machinery to collect the funds it will need. Beginning with September billings, the distributors will include in their film rental bills to the exhibitor a separate item of "voluntary contribution to COMPO," equal to one-tenth of one per cent of his film rental. For example, if an exhibitor receives a film bill in the amount of \$100, he will be asked for a voluntary contribution of ten cents, which sum, when collected, will be matched by the distributor and forwarded to COMPO.

COMPO, to operate effectively, must have funds, and the plan under which the exhibitors are being asked to contribute financial support is most equitable and should not be a burden on him, whether he be a big or small operator. It is, in fact, an insignificant price to pay for the benefits he stands to gain from the important work that will be handled by this all-industry organization.

MYERS' PROPOSAL FOR PRICE HIKE GETS MIXED REACTION

As anticipated in these columns, the suggestion by Abram F. Myers, National Allied's general counsel, that exhibitors resort to moderate increases in admission prices wherever necessary has been received with mixed reaction by theatre owners.

Generally, those who oppose the suggestion claim that an admission price rise at this time will serve only to antagonize the public, and that it will be inconsistent to raise prices so soon after the highly publicized tax campaign, in which movie-goers were asked to help repeal the 20% tax to bring about lower admission prices.

On the other hand, a number of exhibitors throughout the country, particularly in Ohio, have followed through on Mr. Myers' suggestion with in-

creases of from five to ten cents in their admission prices, and none have experienced a decline in attendance as a result of the raise.

According to a report in *Motion Picture Daily*, Mr. Myers said that he has gotten "mostly favorable" reaction to his suggestion but admitted that the ones who agreed with him were more likely to write than those who did not. He feels, however, that he has accomplished his major purpose, which was to start the exhibitors thinking about the matter.

NATIONAL FILM CLINIC AT ALLIED CONVENTION

A National Film Clinic will be held in conjunction with the national convention of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, to be held October 2, 3 and 4 at the William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh.

Pointing out that film buying is the most important subject to every exhibitor, William Finkel, convention chairman, said that it is planned to hold individual meetings at the convention so that the problems peculiar to different types of theatres can be fully discussed with the exhibitors attending the meeting for an exchange of ideas. Separate meetings are planned for the first-run big-city houses, first-run small-town theatres, subsequent-runs and drive-in theatres. At each of these meetings a "film buyers school" will be conducted by experienced leaders on an open forum basis.

Stating that "selective buying" is the greatest victory in the recent Supreme Court decision, Finkel said that methods of securing the benefits of selective buying and all other phases of the decision will be discussed at length during the film clinic. He stated also that a method of dealing with misallocated pictures has been developed and will be explained in detail.

The groundwork for this National Film Clinic was laid by Allied leaders last July at their Chicago meeting, which was called as a result of the many complaints from small-town exhibitors that percentage and flat film rentals are much too high.

"Exhibitors know that their number one problem is film buying," concluded Finkel. "We guarantee that any exhibitor attending this National Film Clinic will receive enough information to compensate him many times for the cost of coming to Pittsburgh. Allied extends a nationwide invitation to all independent exhibitors to attend the 1950 Convention and take part in this initial National Film Clinic."

Among the sales managers who have definitely confirmed their attendance at the convention are William F. Rodgers, of MGM, and Andrew W. Smith, Jr., of 20th Century-Fox.

Gene Autry, whose entry into the television field is meeting with considerable opposition from some exhibitors who, in retaliation, are refusing to book his pictures released through Columbia, has been invited to explain his views and has promised to attend if his working schedule permits.

That the 1950 Allied Convention is creating considerable excitement in exhibition circles is evidenced by the fact that advance reservations are running more than thirty per cent ahead of last year's record-breaking convention in Minneapolis. Those who plan to attend are urged by Mr. Finkel to send reservations in by September 13 to assure good accommodations.

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EAGLE LION ACQUIRES A PRIZE ASSET

Harry Sherman, the veteran producer, whose trademark is the "western," and who is affectionately known throughout the industry as "Pop," has concluded a five-year picture deal with Eagle Lion Classics, calling for the delivery of fifty pictures at the rate of ten a year.

Associated with "Pop" Sherman in this venture is Neil F. Agnew, former president of Selznick Releasing Organization, and former vice-president in charge of distribution at Paramount.

Sherman plans to use the western theme in each of his pictures, and his program calls for the production each year of four top-budget pictures (two in Technicolor), and six smaller budgeted westerns, all in Technicolor. Each of the top pictures will be made on a budget of approximately \$1,000,000, and each will star Hollywood players of the first magnitude. The smaller Technicolor westerns will be produced at an average cost of \$300,000 and will be known as the "Hashknife Hartley" series, based on the William C. Tuttle stories.

Sherman plans to launch an intensive talent search shortly for the purpose of finding a new western personality to fill the role of "Hashknife," the cowboy-detective hero of Tuttle's books.

George "Gabby" Hayes, the popular western star, whom Sherman discovered, has been signed to an exclusive contract to portray the character of "Sleepy" Stevens, the hero's pal.

Having launched the "Hopalong Cassidy" series, as well as numerous other westerns, "Pop" Sherman has long been acknowledged as a producer of the best westerns. A former exhibitor, he is one of the most kind-hearted people one can ever hope to meet, and all who know him personally think the world of him. Ever since he went into production in 1916, he has produced pictures that were, not only of good quality, but also decent and clean, let alone commercially saleable.

Eagle Lion can indeed be proud of the tie-up it has made with Harry Sherman, particularly at this time when there is so much need for producers of his calibre.

HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes "Pop" Sherman continued success, for no one is more deserving of it than a man of his intelligence, ability, knowledge and bigness of heart.

ALLIED TO CONSIDER COOPERATIVE BUYING OF EQUIPMENT

A plan for cooperative buying of theatre equipment to combat existing high prices will be discussed

at Allied's 1950 National Convention in Pittsburgh, according to Abram F. Myers, general counsel and chairman of the board, who had this to say on the subject in a bulletin issued to Allied members on Wednesday of this week:

"Profoundly disturbed by the mounting costs of all manner of theatre equipment, indicating either inflation in the production or price-fixing among the supply dealers, Allied leaders are discussing the feasibility of buying such equipment cooperatively and eliminating so far as possible the middlemen's profits which are widely blamed for existing high prices.

"Efforts are being made to point up the idea for discussion at Pittsburgh and this may prove to be one of the highlights of the convention."

Elsewhere in his bulletin Mr. Myers had this to say on the problems of wartime operation:

"The business outlook will be fully explored in order to see what lies ahead—and to prepare for it.

"Whether or not the Korean police action spreads into another world war, our country is committed to a preparedness program which involves a return to a wartime economy. Many of us have seen it happen twice before, the inflationary tendencies, the trend toward cheap money and free spending.

"The theatres' dollar intake may soon be on the upsurge but those dollars may be cheapened in value so that exhibitors will be well advised to closely supervise their operations and salt away some of them against the inevitable day of reckoning, the date of which is now unpredictable.

"This is only one of the many important questions which far-sighted exhibitors are pondering and which will be discussed at Pittsburgh. Every thoughtful exhibitor has ideas on these problems and he should be on hand to share them with others. Every independent theatre owner should attend in order to listen to and sift the ideas of his fellow exhibitors."

On the subject of the National Film Clinic, which promises to be one of the most important events at the convention, Mr. Myers had this to say:

"Pictures are the exhibitor's lifeblood and no matter how interesting other subjects may be he must give first attention to the problems inherent in the licensing of pictures—their boxoffice value and the terms and conditions on which they are offered—or he will fail.

"Some social clubs posing as exhibitor organizations with an absurd show of self-righteousness assert that films and film prices have no place in the discussions at exhibitor meetings. Allied has never subscribed to that view and holds that exhibitors have the same

(Continued on back page)

**"All About Eve" with Bette Davis,
Anne Baxter and Celeste Holm**

(20th Century-Fox, November; time, 138 min.)

A very good adult drama. It is a notable production on every count—story, writing, direction and acting. Revolving around an evil young woman who, masquerading her true nature under a cloak of shyness and innocence, lets nothing interfere with her driving ambition to become a leading actress, it is a fascinating, continually absorbing story about Broadway theatrical people, given a mature treatment and penetrated with realistic dialogue and flashes of slick, sardonic humor. The proceedings hold one's attention so rapt that one does not notice the running time of two hours and eighteen minutes. The film's sophisticated flavor is especially suited for metropolitan centers, where it is destined to become a big money-maker, but it is not too subtle for the small town trade and should do fairly well in those situations. The acting is uniformly top-grade from stars to bit players, and the three feminine principals have been provided with roles that are perfectly tailored to their respective talents. Anne Baxter is most effective as the aspiring actress who becomes a top success but whose machinations bring heartaches to those who had befriended her. Bette Davis, as an ultra-sophisticated but aging star who is victimized by Miss Baxter, is just right in a fiery characterization, as is Celeste Holm, as the kindly wife of a playwright, who, too, falls victim to the calculating Miss Baxter. At the finish, there is a highly effective bit contributed by Barbara Bates, an attractive starlet, as a stage-struck but scheming 'teen-ager, who worms her way into Miss Baxter's confidence with every indication that she will eventually give Miss Baxter a dose of her own medicine. Joseph L. Mankiewicz, who wrote the original screen play and directed it, has provided some highly imaginative twists and directorial touches. The production values are impressive throughout. Darryl F. Zanuck produced it.

The story opens at a banquet with Anne receiving an award for the best performance of the year. As she accepts the gold statuette with humility, the thoughts of several theatrical people who played a part in her rise are revealed in flashback. Celeste, wife of Hugh Marlowe, a playwright, recalls that nine months previously she had taken pity on Anne, then a stage-struck girl, and had brought her backstage to meet Bette, her idol. By her shyness and good manners, and by her tragic tale about having lost her husband in the war, Anne had ingratiated herself, not only with Bette, but also with Marlowe and with Gary Merrill, Bette's director and fiance. Bette, having developed a protective feeling for Anne, had taken her into her household and had permitted her to become her confidante. But Thelma Ritter, Bette's maid, resented Anne, and within several weeks Bette had become aware of the fact that Anne was insincere and that she was coyly making a play for Merrill. She had abused Anne while in a drunken rage at a party, and everyone, still blinded by Anne's masquerade of innocence, had come to her defense. Playing on this new-found sympathy, Anne had carefully maneuvered Celeste, Marlowe and Merrill into persuading Gregory Ratoff, Bette's producer, to accept her as Bette's understudy, and with the help of George Sanders, a noted but unprincipled critic, had eventually become a top star, even to the point of taking away a part meant for Bette. In the process she had

made an attempt to win Merrill away from Bette and, failing that, had set her cap for Celeste's husband. But Sanders, having discovered that Anne had lied about being a widow and that she had had an unsavory past, had used the information to compel her to give up her designs on Marlowe and to become his own mistress. Coming back to the present, the story has Anne returning to her apartment with the coveted award and finding Barbara Bates waiting for her. Furious because the girl had sneaked into her home, Anne soon softens when she learns that Barbara is a stage-struck youngster who idolized her. As she warms up to Barbara, the story ends with the suggestion that the girl will go about building a stage career for herself by using Anne as a stepping stone.

"All About Eve," as most exhibitors probably know by this time, is the picture with which 20th Century-Fox will inaugurate its "scheduled performances" plan. This plan calls for the exhibitor to set a definite time for each performance and to sell non-reserved tickets in advance for each specific performance, with no one, not even ticket-holders, to be seated after the picture is started. The purpose is to make patrons see the picture from the beginning so that they may fully understand and enjoy the proceedings, and thus give it favorable word-of-mouth advertising. In the opinion of this reviewer, all pictures, big or small, should be seen from the beginning for full enjoyment. But whether or not this particular picture, more than any other, should be seen from the start is debatable. The fact remains, however, that there is definite exploitation values in the scheduled performances idea, and it may be wise for the exhibitor to give it a trial wherever his situation permits. Incidentally, 20th-Fox has announced that the exhibition contracts for this picture will require single-billing. No other feature-length picture will be permitted to be shown on the same program.

Strictly adult fare.

**"The Fuller Brush Girl" with Lucille Ball
and Eddie Albert**

(Columbia, October; time, 85 min.)

This is one of those wildly slapstick comedies that are the forte of the director Lloyd Bacon, whose last effort in this category was "The Good Humor Man." Like that picture, this one, too, does not match the entertainment values of "The Fuller Brush Man," yet it is an entertaining picture of its kind and should give ample satisfaction to those who enjoy this type of comedy. The story, of course, is completely nonsensical, but it serves as an adequate device for projecting the many comical gags and situations, some highly inventive, that are reminiscent of the Mack Sennett Keystone comedies. The pace is fast and furious from start to finish, and Lucille Ball literally knocks herself out trying to keep up with the plot complications, which are so dizzy that they defy any attempt to synopsise.

Briefly, however, the story has Lucille and Eddie Albert, sweethearts, working in a steamship company owned by Jerome Cowan, who secretly used the firm as a front for the illegal smuggling of diamonds. Cowan fires Lucille for inefficiency, but he retains the timid Albert to use him as a dummy executive in the firm. Needing money to get married and to help Albert establish a home for them, Lucille takes a job with the Fuller Brush Company to sell their new line of cosmetics. Her adventures while canvassing from

house to house eventually implicate her in two murders committed by Cowan's gang, and before long she becomes a suspect. She then becomes the object of a police hunt, with Albert helping her to elude the law. After many complications, Lucille and Albert are lured aboard a freighter owned by Cowan, and an exciting chase ensues from one end of the ship to the other when they escape from their stateroom. It all ends explosively when a case of dynamite blows up the ship. The final fadeout finds the lovers safe, embracing each other on a floating piece of wreckage. Meanwhile, of course, their innocence had been established.

Among the highly amusing situations, outstanding are the ones in which Lucille, trapped in a burlesque theatre, does a strip-tease act to evade capture, and in which she and Albert get all tangled up in television aerials during a chase over roof-tops, causing the owners of the video sets to get fantastic pictures. A brief but amusing highlight is where a householder canvassed by Lucille turns out to be Red Skelton, who sells her some brushes before she can give him her sales pitch.

Frank Tashlin wrote the original screen play. No producer credit is listed.

Suitable for the family.

"Farewell to Yesterday"

(20th Century-Fox, Sept.; time, 90 min.)

This is a highly interesting documentary pictorial history of world events during the last thirty years, depicting the cause and effect of war. Compiled from newsreel clips and from official Allied and enemy films, most of the footage is familiar, yet it is an arresting presentation from start to finish by reason of the excellent job done on the editing and on the commentary. Unlike other recent documentary films, this one omits the frivolous side of life and, through a series of powerfully dramatic sequences, concentrates on the events that since the end of World War I have put the entire world into a condition of chaos from which it has not yet recovered.

Beginning with the signing of the treaty at Versailles, the film traces the unrest that arose all over Europe in the struggle against poverty, giving birth to Fascism and Nazism and leading to the unholy alliance between Hitler and Mussolini. Picturing the fall of the League of Nations, the appeasement of Hitler, and the invasion of Poland that set off World War II, the film then dwells on the horrors of war, depicting the 82-day blitz against England by the Nazis, the invasion of the Lowlands and France, and the different European battlegrounds. It shows in minute detail the destruction of property in the big European cities, and the heartbreaking suffering of people at home and of soldiers on the battlefield. Much of this is so appalling that it leaves one depressed. Shown also is America's involvement in the war with the attack on Pearl Harbor, and the subsequent battles that raged throughout the South Pacific on sea and on land before the conflict was brought to an end with the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan. The final reel is concerned principally with the outbreak of war in Korea.

Those who will see this film cannot escape its powerful message, which is that we must learn our lesson from the mistakes in the past, and that we must at all times be fully prepared to meet lawless aggression with force.

It was produced by Edmund Reek and edited by Louis Tetunic. Written by Joseph Kenas, the commentary is shared by Sidney Blackmer, John Larkin, Kermit Murdock and William Post, Jr.

"The Breaking Point" with John Garfield, Patricia Neal and Phyllis Thaxter

(Warner Bros., Sept. 30; time, 97 min.)

This melodrama offers some violent action as well as some spicy dialogue that is spouted by a woman of loose morals, but as entertainment it is somber and depressing. Moreover, the story, which is a pretty free adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's "To Have and Have Not," is handicapped by characterizations that are not clearly motivated. Another weakness lies in the fact that the spectator is asked to follow the fate of an unsympathetic hero, a man who knowingly breaks the law from start to finish. As an impoverished charter fishing boat owner who is always in trouble, John Garfield manages to give some credence to his role, but Patricia Neal, as a playgirl who is constantly making passes at him, is not given much of a chance by a role that not only has little to do with the story but seems to have been dragged in by the ear to give the proceedings some spice. Considerable sympathy is felt for Phyllis Thaxter, who gives a touching portrayal as Garfield's suffering wife, and for Juano Hernandez, as Garfield's loyal helper. On the whole, however, it impresses one as a pointless story of sex and violence:—

Garfield, an ex-GI with a wife and two children, barely ekes out a living chartering his cruiser to fishing parties. Heavily in debt, he finds it difficult to meet the payments due on the cruiser. He gets a break when a wealthy playboy charts his boat for a cruise to Mexico with Patricia, a good-time girl. During the trip, Garfield, finds it necessary to resist Patricia's advances. The playboy disappears in Mexico, leaving Garfield, his helper, and Patricia stranded. Needing funds to return to the States, Garfield makes a deal through Wallace Ford, a shady lawyer, to smuggle eight Chinese into the States, but he forces the Chinese overboard in shallow Mexican waters when their leader, whom he kills, tries to doublecross him on the price. When he returns home, Garfield's boat is impounded by the Coast Guard, which had heard rumors about his attempt to smuggle in the Chinese. Despondent, he goes on a drunk, and Patricia, who had returned with him, once again makes a play for him. Phyllis, however, soon makes her understand that Garfield is not an unfaithful husband. Ford comes to the States and, by seeing to it that Garfield's boat is returned by court order, persuades him to make a deal with four gangsters who wanted to make a getaway in his boat after holding up a racetrack. Phyllis' pleas that he give up the job are unavailing. Having pulled off the holdup successfully, the gangsters arrive at the pier and shoot down Garfield's helper, who had joined him unexpectedly. They then force Garfield to take them out to sea. Positive that they will kill him when he gets them to their destination, Garfield, at sea, succeeds in killing them all in a furious gun battle, but is wounded seriously himself. He is rescued by the Coast Guard and told that his damaged arm must be amputated. He prefers to die, but Phyllis induces him to consent to the operation so that they might try life anew.

It was produced by Jerry Wald and directed by Michael Curtiz from a screen play by Randal MacDougall. Strictly adult fare.

right to discuss product and prices at their conventions as the distributors have to consider those subjects at their sales meetings.

"If there ever was a time for exhibitors to take stock of their situation, filmwise and otherwise, it is now. In recognition of this the Convention Committee has approved the following name for the gathering: ALLIED'S 1950 NATIONAL CONVENTION AND FILM CLINIC. That the exhibitors are seeking solution of their problems is indicated by the fact that advance reservations for the Pittsburgh Convention are running ahead of the advance reservations for the record-breaking convention held in Minneapolis last year."

Stating that "there is no problem too big or too difficult for an Allied convention to tackle, if to do so is in the interest of the independent exhibitors," Mr. Myers said that exhibitors who come to Pittsburgh this year will be doing themselves a favor. "Leaders from other branches of the industry will bring their messages to Pittsburgh," he added, "but as is always the case at Allied gatherings, there will be ample opportunity for the exhibitors to discuss matters of special interest to themselves in their own way."

Among the sales managers who have already promised to attend the convention are William F. Rodgers, of MGM, Andy W. Smith, Jr., of 20th Century-Fox, and Al Schwalberg, of Paramount.

MORE ABOUT ALLIED'S NATIONAL FILM CLINIC

In connection with the National Film Clinic to be held in conjunction with the National Allied Convention in Pittsburgh on October 2, 3 and 4, Trueman T. Rembusch, Allied president, has appointed the following Allied leaders as chairmen of the forums that will be held for the different types of theatres: Col. H. A. Cole and Charles Niles, small towns; Sidney Samuelson and Arthur Rush, medium towns and suburban runs; Nathan Yamins and O. F. Sullivan, city runs. Martin Smith and Wilbur Snaper, key neighborhoods and subsequent runs; and John Wolfberg and Rube Shor, drive-ins. A special meeting will be conducted by Jack Kirsch and Abe Berenson for circuit buyers, including combines, as well as for those who are interested in bidding situations.

All the meetings will be held in separate rooms so that film buyers in like situations will be able to discuss mutual problems.

Pointing out that the increase in film rentals by the various distributors has been a main topic of discussion at all the regional conventions held by the Allied units this year, Mr. Rembusch stated that there is no doubt in his mind that there is a concerted effort to raise film rentals on a nation-wide basis at a time when they (the distributors) should be thinking of keeping their customers in business.

"The convention committee," said Rembusch, "has developed this National Film Clinic as a school of instruction for film buyers. Last year we celebrated the Allied Victory Convention, at the conclusion of a long eleven-year fight to bring about the many reforms of the Supreme Court decision. Now we are

going to see that the independent exhibitors realize the benefits of the decision. The only way any exhibitor can gain all the benefits of the decision is to be thoroughly informed of his rights. Those rights will be the subject matter of the National Film Clinic."

Rembusch announced also that Arthur Mayer, executive vice-president of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, has accepted an invitation to speak at the Allied convention, at which time he will outline to the exhibitors present the full scope of COMPO's activities.

From all indications, the Allied Convention in Pittsburgh promises plenty of fireworks, particularly in regard to the boost on film rentals. One who is sure to spark the fireworks is Bennie Berger, president of North Central Allied, who has announced that he will bring to the convention floor figures showing that the distributors are collecting approximately 200% more in film rentals from independent neighborhood and suburban exhibitors in Minneapolis and St. Paul than they did before the consent decree. Berger, as quoted in weekly *Variety*, said: "Northwest Allied directors have protested to the distributors, but nothing has come of it. Distributors persist in their gouging policy although theatre grosses are declining and costs are generally increasing, with film companies' earnings greater than ever."

No doubt the other Allied leaders, too, will come to the convention prepared to offer evidence that will support the outcry lately against the distributors' rental demands and terms. Just how the convention will work out a solution to this problem should be interesting.

DOUBTFUL IF NEW CREDIT CONTROLS WILL AFFECT TV SET SALES

Acting under the new Economic Control Bill signed by President Truman last week, the Federal Reserve Board has clamped tight controls on installment purchases of new and used television sets. Effective September 18, purchasers of television sets will have to make a down payment of 15% and will have to pay the balance in 18 months.

Although some of the trade papers, in reporting this item, described it as a serious setback for the television industry, HARRISON'S REPORTS is of the opinion that the new installment credit controls will not effectively curb purchases of television sets, for the new terms are not much stiffer than those currently in use. At the most, it means an additional five per cent on the down payment and a little less time to pay the balance, all of which probably will mean very little to those who have their hearts set on buying a television set, what with higher wages and more take-home-pay in the offing as a result of the many billions of dollars that will be spent in the defense effort.

Unless either the credit controls are made much more stiffer, or production of TV sets is restricted because of allocations of critical materials to meet defense requirements, the sale of television receiving sets will undoubtedly continue at a record-breaking pace.

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INDUSTRY UP IN ARMS AGAINST MARTIN-LEWIS TELEVISION SLUR

A perfect example of "biting the hand that feeds you" was displayed last Sunday night on television by comedians Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis in a comedy skit that belittled and ridiculed the motion picture industry in a way that was nothing short of vicious.

The scene was the front of a motion picture theatre, and the skit opened with Martin, as the theatre manager, vainly trying to entice customers by marking down the admission price from 80¢ to 60¢ and then to 40¢, and finally hanging up a sign that offered "easy credit terms." To show how bad business was, the skit depicted a balcony usher rushing out of the theatre stark, raving mad, the result of loneliness. The rest of the skit had to do with Martin attempting to persuade Jerry Lewis, a passing 'teen-ager, to buy a ticket. He succeeds with the aid of the cashier, a sexy female in a low-necked, split-skirted gown, who does a partial strip-tease to lure Lewis into the theatre. Worked into the proceedings were gags that depicted Martin and his staff of ushers shuddering at the mere mention of television, and a situation that showed them brow-beating Lewis into buying a box of popcorn. All in all, the skit purported to show, in a humorous way, of course, that television has just about bankrupted the motion picture theatres.

As a result of this objectionable skit, Arthur L. Mayer, executive vice-president of COMPO, has sent a vigorous protest to Frank Folsom, president of the Radio Corporation of America, parent company of NBC. Mayer wired Folsom as follows:

"This organization, representing all branches of the motion picture industry, strongly protests attack on our business contained in Dean Martin-Jerry Lewis show on WNBT Sunday night. In depicting motion picture theatres as places shunned by public both producers of show and WNBT have done serious damage to this industry. We cannot believe that you as responsible head of Radio Corporation of America condone such irresponsible attacks and we ask that you take steps immediately to see that this scene is not repeated on other stations."

At the time this is being written, Mr. Folsom had not yet replied to Mr. Mayer's wire.

Another protest came from Harry Brandt, president of the Independent Theatre Owners Association, who, in behalf of his organization, said the following, in part, in a telegram sent to Hal Wallis, producer of the "My Friend Irma" pictures, in which Martin and Lewis are featured:

"Theatre owners in the New York area are outraged. . . . In this sketch, Martin and Lewis ridicule motion picture exhibition and production and present the industry in the worst possible light.

"Personalities who work for financial gain in the industry and who continue to profit through the medium should not slur or smear the industry which is so good to them. Only recently, the Screen Actors Guild urged all its members to help promote motion pictures whenever the opportunity arises, particularly in other mediums of communication such as radio and television. Apparently Martin and Lewis are unaware of this effort, as witness their completely distorted picture of industry conditions.

"By virtue of your contract with them, we ask you to take whatever disciplinary action you can to curb their future antics in tearing down the good public relations that we are building up through COMPO. Martin and Lewis are guilty of a disservice to you, to Paramount Pictures which has released their films, to the exhibitors who play their pictures, and to the entire industry, and particularly to themselves as independent producers."

Another who was quick to comment on the ill-advised Martin and Lewis skit was Abram F. Myers, National Allied's general counsel and chairman of the board, who had this to say, in part, in a special bulletin issued early this week to his membership:

"It is bad enough when any performer, regardless of whether he has ever appeared in pictures, uses the medium of television to ridicule and deride the movies. It is most reprehensible for players who have been elevated to stardom and enriched by the movies to do so. And when players who are appearing in films currently playing in the theatres go out of their way to slander the movies, it is time for the motion picture industry to do something about it.

"A case in point was the Colgate sponsored show featuring the erstwhile movie comedians Martin and Lewis, which was televised last Sunday evening. The performance, we are informed, consisted of a burlesque of the motion picture business. . . .

"While this show was being given over television, free to anybody having access to a receiving set, motion picture exhibitors (including our informant) were playing Paramount's 'My Friend Irma Goes West,' featuring the comedians Martin and Lewis and charging an admission price therefor.

"If this were merely an isolated case, it still would be in bad taste but we might shrug it off as one of those things. But panning the movies is becoming a habit of television comedians and unless a halt is

(Continued on back page)

"Timber Fury" with David Bruce and Laura Lee

(Eagle-Lion, September; time, 60 min.)

The fact that it is an outdoor picture, that it has been based on a story by James Oliver Curwood, and that the action is pretty fast, may make it suitable for the lower half of a double bill. But the direction is not so good, and the script, based on an amateurish treatment, is inadequate. There happen in the action things that are forced. For instance, the movie-goers will not believe that the hero could have been held for the murder of the log mill owner, least of all that he would run away for the purpose of establishing his innocence. And the villain finds it so easy to get away with his nefarious schemes! David Bruce is a weak hero; his noisy breathing before starting to speak is annoying in the extreme. If the director could not have corrected this fault in Bruce he should have told the producer to get some one else in his place. Sam Flint is "hammy" in his part. The photography is good:—

Returning from college to her home in the great Northwest timber country, Laura Lee learns that Flint, her father, is trying desperately to fulfill a contract for timber delivery, unaware that George Slocum, his foreman, was being paid by a business rival to delay the delivery. After the derauling of a logging train, the work of Slocum and his henchmen, Flint hires David Bruce, a river engineer, to dam the river to enable him to float enough logs to fulfill the contract. Bruce and Laura meet and fall in love. Beaten by Bruce when he tries to harm Laura's dog, Slocum vows vengeance. The dam is finished and Bruce prepares to blow it up so as to let the logs float down the river. Slocum, however, instructs his henchmen to break the log jam ahead of Bruce's signal. But Bruce, risking his life, blows up the dam ahead of time and thus prevents a catastrophe. Flint surprises Slocum in the act of stealing dynamite to blow up the saw mill, and Slocum in desperation, clubs him to death. Attracted to the scene by the mournful howlings of Laura's dog, Bruce is found there by the sheriff and jailed for the crime. Slocum incites a mob to lynch Bruce, but Laura, finding the imprint of a woman's shoe at the scene of the crime, traces it to Nicola di Bruno, Slocum's woman, and extracts from her a confession that Slocum had murdered Flint. The sheriff is informed and he and a posse finally corner Slocum who, during a fierce battle with Bruce, slips and falls to his death in the raging waters of the river. Bruce and Laura plan to wed.

The screen play, based on the James Oliver Curwood story "Retribution," was written by Michael Hansen from an adaptation by Sam Neuman and Nat Tanchuck. It is a Jack Schwarz production, produced and directed by Bernard B. Ray.

Harmless for family audiences, despite the relationship between Slocum and Miss Di Bruno.

"The Glass Menagerie" with Jane Wyman, Gertrude Lawrence, Kirk Douglas and Arthur Kennedy

(Warner Bros., Oct. 28; time, 107 min.)

Adapted from Tennessee Williams' hit stage play of the same name, this drama has been produced

artistically, but as entertainment it will appeal mainly to cultured picture-goers who will appreciate the sensitive writing, the expert direction and the flawless acting. That it will prove satisfying to the masses is doubtful, for it is almost like a photographed stage play—all talk and little movement. Moreover, nearly all the action takes place in a dingy tenement apartment, and the story, though it has its touches of humor, is cheerless and tends to distress one. Another drawback insofar as the rank and file picture-goers are concerned is that the story, which is a character study of four people, has been given an unconventional treatment and ends on an inconclusive note that will leave many a spectator bewildered.

The pivotal character in the story is Gertrude Lawrence, as the middle-aged mother of two children—Jane Wyman, a shy, crippled girl, and Arthur Kennedy, a frustrated poet, who worked in a warehouse at a job he disliked so as to support the family. A faded Southern belle who had been deserted by her husband years previously, Miss Lawrence dominates her children to the point of tyranny out of a desire to make them overcome their life of poverty and achieve the sort of life that she had once known. Kennedy, hounded by his mother to bring home a "gentleman caller" for his sister, is constantly at odds with her because of her nagging. Jane, whose shyness stemmed from her physical deformity, avoids people and finds contentment by playing with her collection of miniature glass animals. When Jane fails to make the grade in a typing school, Miss Lawrence resolves that, if her daughter cannot make a career of business, she at least can make one of marriage. She finally prevails on Kennedy to bring home to dinner Kirk Douglas, a fellow-worker at the warehouse. Douglas, sympathetic to Jane, draws out the shy, gentle girl and does his utmost to help her get over her inferiority complex, even taking her to a dance hall to prove to her that her ailment is no bar to happiness. Extremely happy during the few hours that she is with Douglas, Jane falls in love with him. Realizing that he had gone too far, and afraid to hurt her further, Douglas confesses that he is already engaged to another girl. Jane is crushed, but the meeting cures her of her introspection and shyness. After Douglas leaves, Miss Lawrence, bitterly disappointed, upbraids Kennedy for bringing home an engaged man instead of an eligible one. Kennedy leaves home in disgust and goes off to sea. The closing scenes show Kennedy in a distant port months later, visualizing a more confident Jane and her mother awaiting the arrival of another "gentleman caller."

The story has many touching and pathetic moments that cannot be described in a brief synopsis. Gertrude Lawrence is excellent as the mother, a role that calls for the portrayal of a wide variety of human qualities, which she achieves with subtle shadings. Miss Wyman is deeply sympathetic in her part, and Kirk Douglas and Arthur Kennedy are highly effective in their respective roles.

It was produced by Jerry Wald and Charles K. Feldman, and directed by Irving Rapper, from a screen play written by Tennessee Williams and Peter Bernes.

Unobjectionable morally, but it is a film for mature minds.

"Prisoners in Petticoats" with Valentine Perkins and Robert Rockwell
(*Republic, Sept. 18; time, 60 min.*)

A weak program crook melodrama that barely makes the grade as a supporting feature, even for a mid-week double-bill. Trite in story and stereotyped in direction and acting, there is little about it to save it from mediocrity. The plot is not only implausible but also lacking in fast and exciting action. Valentine Perkins, as the heroine, is amateurish. The others in the cast handle their routine roles in acceptable fashion, but even so they are wasted on a story that is hackneyed and poorly written:—

Valentine Perkins, an accomplished pianist, arrives in the city from an upstate town, where her father is a professor, and obtains a job in a night club operated by Anthony Caruso, a sleek gangster who used the club as a blind for his other shady operations. Because no one else would give her a job, Valentine believes Caruso to be a good-hearted man, but she changes her identity lest her father learn that she had stooped to playing in a night-club. When a mobster is murdered outside the club, Robert Rockwell, a special investigator for the District Attorney, questions Joan as a witness. He realizes that she is not the kind of a girl to be mixed up with gangsters, and warns her to stay away from Tony Barrett, a smooth killer, who was making a play for her. Although she realizes that Rockwell is falling in love with her himself, Valentine remains loyal to Barrett. In the complicated events that follow, Barrett double-crosses Caruso's gang in a \$100,000 holdup and hides the money in one of Valentine's suitcases, which she unwittingly stores in the attic of her father's home, thinking that it contained her sheet music. Barrett is slain by Caruso's henchmen when he goes to Valentine's city apartment to retrieve the loot, and Valentine, refusing to give any information about herself lest it bring disgrace to her father, is sent to prison as an accomplice to the crime. Caruso plants Danni Sue Nolan, his moll, in prison to lure Valentine into revealing the whereabouts of the money. Danni's questions make Valentine aware of the fact that the money is in her suitcase. In an elaborate scheme, she joins Danni in a jailbreak under a pretense of sharing the loot with Caruso's gang, but once on the outside she manages to get word to Rockwell, who rescues her and rounds up the gang.

It was produced by Lou Brock and directed by Philip Ford from a screen play by Bradbury Foote, based on an original story by Raymond Shrock and George Callahan.

Adult farc

ALLIED CLAIMS PHONEVISION TEST WILL PROVE INCONCLUSIVE

The following press release was sent out this week by Trueman T. Rembusch, president of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors:

"The Allied television committee will report to the national board of directors' meeting in Pittsburgh at the William Penn Hotel on September 30 and October 1, on two TV developments affecting the motion picture exhibitor.

"One of these is the contract that Zenith Radio is using to secure subscribers for their much delayed

test run of Phonevision. As of this date, Zenith has not announced what product they will use on the test and it is very doubtful if they will be able to secure sufficient film for the test. If they do secure sufficient film, the results obtained from the test will prove inconclusive due to one portion of the contract that is being used by Zenith to secure Phonevision installations for the test. That clause has to do with the non-payment, by the subscriber, of his bill for Phonevision service. The contents of that penalty clause are as follows:

"It is agreed that, in the event you do not make payment of our bills for Phonevision subscriptions within the time above specified, we, at our election, may remove from your home any television set and Phonevision decoder installed therein by us, or any Phonevision decoder we may have installed in your own television set; and on our direction the Illinois Bell Telephone Company, under such circumstances, shall have the right to remove from your home the connection above mentioned including the special leased telephone wire provided for the test. Such removal of our equipment and the special telephone connection shall constitute the only penalty for your failure to make payment of our bills, and we agree to take no legal action to collect such bills and we waive any right to enforce payment thereof."

"Under the provisions of this clause, obviously any Phonevision subscriber can order all of the Phonevision movies he wants without any legal obligation on his part to pay for the service. Such a precedent in selling Phonevision to the public without any liability on the part of the subscriber to pay for the service used, sets up a pattern of giving film away on Phonevision. Under these circumstances, the Allied TV committee cannot help but wonder if any producer would be foolhardy enough to turn his back upon his regular customers, the exhibitors, and sell his film for Phonevision use.

"The Allied television committee will urge the Allied National Board of Directors meeting in Pittsburgh to give serious consideration to the Zenith matter.

"They will also bring up for consideration Gene Autry's latest deal with CBS for production of '26' videotapes under the title of "The Range Rider" and starring Jock O'Mahoney, as reported in *Variety* on September 6. It appears that Mr. Autry miscalculated in his recent letter to Pete Wood, secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, explaining that he personally was making pictures for TV to improve grosses on his pictures playing in the regular theatres. The Allied TV committee would like for Mr. Autry to explain away his latest support of TV by Autry. It is their opinion that Pete Wood was right when he said, 'Is Autry naive enough to think that the public will pay to see him when they can see him for free? When he can be seen in films for nothing, that's exactly what he will be worth to the exhibitors who play his pictures.'

"No doubt, when this latest endeavor of Autry's in behalf of TV to the detriment of the motion picture industry is brought to the attention of the Allied board of directors, it will become an important topic on the Allied convention program to be held October 2, 3 and 4 in Pittsburgh."

called they will succeed in convincing some of their audience that the movies are indeed a thing of the past and that it is a waste of time and money to patronize the theatres. No less a personage than Bob Hope, on his Easter television show, went out of his way to ridicule the movies and, considering what the movies have done for Mr. Hope, that was the unkindest cut of all.

"Still another was a program sponsored by Ford Motor Company on Sunday, July 30, featuring one Johnny Johnston, substituting for Eddie Sullivan. He felt called upon to say, in substance, 'I went across the street from the station (CBS) to see a movie. The picture was so bad they had to spread Airwick to fumigate the place and also to fumigate the popcorn.' We find no reference to this Johnston in Motion Picture Almanac and perhaps his only connection with the movies is by marriage. In any case, he should be on our list—he never will be missed.

"Martin and Lewis are said to be good comedians but certainly they are not indispensable to the motion picture business and they and their kind should be told in no uncertain way that if they use a rival medium of entertainment to injure the motion picture business, they cannot hereafter expect to appear in the films. The motion picture producers should take a firm stand on this right now, before serious damage is done.

"And if the producers ignore this condition or take a weak-kneed stand, then the exhibitors must serve notice that they will be slow to play pictures featuring those traducers of the motion picture business.

"Also the sponsors of these comedians should be informed of the industry's resentment of such tactics. Fun's fun and the motion picture industry can enjoy a joke at its expense, but it cannot permit an endless repetition of these slanders. Colgate would scream bloody murder if a movie made slighting references to its products and we have a right to expect the same consideration from Colgate.

"Members have asked that this subject be included in the agenda for the forthcoming Allied board meeting and that it be dealt with at the Pittsburgh Convention. Regardless of what other branches may do, the exhibitors will have their say on this subject and it is a safe bet that they will take definite action."

There is little one could add to what has already been said about this matter by Messrs. Mayer, Brandt and Myers, except to say that Martin and Lewis would do well to come through with profuse apologies to the industry and with assurances that in their future appearances on radio or television they will exercise greater care in the choice of material that has any connection with the motion picture business.

Recently, this comedy pair completed "At War with the Army," an independent production that has not yet been set for release through any distributing company. In addition to starring in the picture, it has been reported that they have a financial interest in it. If such is the case, Martin and Lewis, as a result of their thoughtlessness, are in the unenviable position of having maligned and offended the exhibitors, whose good will they need if they are to recoup their investment and emerge with a profit. They had better make amends soon lest the exhibitors prove to them that their comedy skit last Sunday night was not so funny after all.

ALLIED CHARGES EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS AND DEALERS WITH "UNBRIDLED PROFITEERING"

In a press release issued last weekend from his headquarters in Franklin, Indiana, Trueman T. Rembusch, National Allied president, charged that "unbridled profiteering" by the manufacturers of theatre equipment and supplies is one of the major complaints being brought to his attention by Allied members.

Typical of these complaints, said Rembusch, is a letter received from Abe Berenson, a director of Allied Theatre Owners of the Gulf States, in which he points out that the price of carpet for theatres has risen in the last few years from \$3.25 per yard to \$9.60 per yard. Berenson pointed out also that, instead of reducing prices on discontinued patterns, a practice that is usually followed by carpet retailers outside of the motion picture industry, the theatre carpet suppliers invariably push their stocks of discontinued patterns by increasing prices on the new patterns. He charged also that the exhibitor is further victimized by the practice of discontinuing patterns, which prevents him from securing enough carpet yardage of the pattern in use in his theatre for the purpose of repairing worn spots in areas that are heavily traveled.

Berenson took up also the "terrific increase" in the price of projection heads, "in spite of the fact that the number of moving parts in projection heads manufactured today has been reduced substantially," claiming that the reduced manufacturing costs should have brought about a corresponding decrease in the price of new projection heads.

On the subject of carbons, Berenson charged that in December of 1949 there was a whispered campaign by suppliers that the price of carbons would be increased by 10%, but that this price increase did not take place because one of the small independent manufacturers of carbon refused to go along on the increase with the manufacturer dominating that particular market.

Turning to outdoor theatre speakers, Berenson said that the price of these units was in the neighborhood of \$40 each until outside manufacturers entered that field, resulting in competition that has made good units available for as low as \$14 each.

Berenson charged also that the mark-ups in the merchandising of equipment and supplies for motion picture theatres run from a minimum of 100% to as high as 300%, which are greatly in excess of mark-ups used in other industries. He added that a National Allied cooperative buying plan would eliminate the "terrific profiteering" in the theatre equipment and supply field.

Commenting on Berenson's observations, Rembusch said: "It is obvious that the monopoly and price-fixing inherent within the theatre equipment and supply market is due in no small part to the closely knit organization known as TESMA (Theatre Equipment and Supply Manufacturers' Association)."

Rembusch stated that Berenson, as well as Benny Berger, president, and Stanley Kane, executive secretary, of North Central Allied, who three years ago advanced the co-op idea, will present to the forthcoming Allied convention in Pittsburgh, on October 2-4, all the background information necessary toward establishing a co-op organization to furnish the exhibitors' equipment and supply needs. The subject promises to be one of the convention's highlights.

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THE PCCITO MEETING AT LAKE TAHOE

The Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Exhibitors, composed of six constituent regional associations representing exhibitors in eight western states and the territory of Alaska, held its annual convention on September 14-15-16-17 in the Cal-Neva Lodge at Lake Tahoe, California-Nevada.

Because I happened to be in California, I attended the convention at the invitation of Mr. Rotus Harvey, president of the organization, and had an opportunity to observe at first hand the constructive work that is being done by this fine exhibitor group.

At the end of the first session, a chairman and committee members for each of the following committees were selected and instructed to meet and bring back to the convention their recommendations: Film Rentals, Information Service, Unit Service, Theatre Service, Production, and Cost and Price Control.

On the second day, Mr. Harvey was reelected as president; Ben Levin, as treasurer; and Hannah K. Oppie, as executive secretary.

Following the elections, several speakers were heard, including B. F. Shearer, an exhibitor, who spoke on "The Future as it Affects Manpower, Materials and Priorities; Al Rogell, president of the Screen Directors Guild, who spoke interestingly on "Celluloid Bullets," describing the value of motion pictures in the present world crisis; Mrs. Hulda McGinn, public relations representative of the California Theatres Association, who spoke on "The Value of Public Relations"; and E. Bertram Watkins, who made a highly interesting speech on insurance under the heading, "So You Think You Are Insured." I plan to deal more extensively with this insurance speech as soon as I can obtain a transcript.

The reports of the Production Committee and of the Film Rental Committee contain recommendations that are so interesting that I am reproducing them in the belief that they will be of benefit to all exhibitors.

The Production Committee report follows:

"As exhibitors we are vitally interested in production. We are extremely proud of Hollywood's record in leading the world with the highest standard of motion picture production. We have pride in Hollywood's record of contributing to Democracy and extolling the American Way of Life. Hollywood will do well to continue to work hard to maintain this record in the face of increasing pressure on all sides to fall to the lure of every imaginable 'ism.'

"We are anxious to have everyone concerned with PRODUCTION know that we are their best friends. Frequently we may be critical of them but only as a brother is critical of a brother who is inclined at times to be wayward. We will always come forward to the defense of Hollywood when it is criticized by an outsider. We have in the past done this and will always do it. We are vitally concerned with public relations in our own communities as well as industry-wide.

"We want producers to know we are anxious for movies that furnish ENTERTAINMENT in capital letters. 'Escapism' is no crime. Movie patrons today are more and more critical of what they will accept on our screen. They want film fare which gives them relaxation from the cares of a world in stress and turmoil. Our patrons are rejecting Crime . . . Psychos . . . Suspense . . . Murder . . . Melodramas . . . Propaganda. The biggest boxoffice pictures of

the year are pictures appealing to the entire family with comedy predominant, i.e., CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN, FATHER OF THE BRIDE, FRANCIS, etc. We are receiving an alarming number of complaints of brutality and sadism. This is even more concerning when it is found in outdoor pictures which have generally good appeal to juveniles. We want moving pictures that MOVE. Excessive dialogue with a resultant loss in action has always been a problem.

"All suggestions by this committee are not to satisfy the personal likes or dislikes of the exhibitor members. Rather they are the expression of the likes and dislikes of the majority of our patrons. We feel as if we are closer than anyone to movie patrons. Our information can be of inestimable value to Hollywood. We urge that some producers could gain tremendous knowledge by polling exhibitors regularly asking for pertinent comments.

"This committee was wholeheartedly in accord that our Trustees be urged to suggest in the strongest recommendation the following:

"That some agency such as COMPO or the Johnston Office be given authority by all producers to establish a system of releasing so that there is always a variety of features in release at the same time. This last summer we have seen many super-westerns dissipated because our audiences have been surfeited with too many of this kind. If such an authority is not workable then we suggest each company make sure its own release schedule is in balance with good variety. Even this month MGM is releasing three musicals in succession . . . THREE LITTLE WORDS, SUMMER STOCK and DUCHESS OF IDAHO. Such a product is too valuable to waste in this manner. Good variety will also assure a steady flow of good product at all times so there is no period when we have inferior pictures to offer for two or three months.

"Our committee was greatly concerned with the subject of good and bad titles. The following were subject to much criticism: CRISIS, SUSPENSE, ASPHALT JUNGLE, CRY MURDER, DEADLY IS THE FEMALE, NO SAD SONGS FOR ME, TICKET TO TOMAHAWK, IN A LONELY PLACE, HIGH LONESOME, AN ACT OF MURDER, CURTAIN CALL AT CACTUS CREEK, STELLA, MR. 880, ACT OF VIOLENCE, etc. The committee recommends that titles with a single name such as FRANCIS or STELLA be followed by a parenthetical phrase to describe the picture. This was effective with the former followed by (the talking mule). Producers are to be commended for such GOOD titles as ROCKETSHIP XM, FATHER WAS A FULLBACK, FANCY PANTS, I WAS A MALE WAR BRIDE, THE GOOD HUMOR MAN, CARIBOO TRAIL, MR. BELVEDERE GOES TO COLLEGE, etc. Ambiguity in titles is not desirable.

"Advanced admission prices as forced by producers and distributors through various devious means is to be condemned. Advanced children's prices for CINDERELLA was particularly condemned.

"Our committee was critical of long complicated story lines that have sub-plots, by-plots and make for confusion. Stories and scripts should be kept tight and simple.

"Our committee was also critical of 're-makes' of pictures within a period of seven or eight years which were originally no great hits to begin with . . . pictures in this category were CONVICTED, LOVE THAT BRUTE, WABASH AVENUE to name only a few.

"The mis-casting of stars is often disastrous to the picture itself and to the future drawing power of the player.

(Continued on back page)

"King Solomon's Mines" with Deborah Kerr and Stewart Granger

(MGM, no rel. date set; time, 102 min.)

Photographed in Technicolor, this is a highly spectacular romantic adventure melodrama that has the rare quality of holding an audience captivated from start to finish. The story, based on H. Rider Haggard's famous novel about a dangerous trek into unexplored Africa to search for a missing white man and for a legendary diamond mine, is "hokum," but it has been presented in so fascinating a manner and on such a vast scale that one enjoys every minute of it. The production was filmed in its entirety in Africa, making for scenic shots that are as breathtakingly beautiful as any ever seen on the screen, and for wild animal shots that are extraordinary. Words cannot adequately describe the exciting experiences the safari encounters with man and beast, nor their hair-breadth escapes as they make their way through dense hot jungles, across torrid deserts and over snowcapped mountains. A high point in the excitement is a hand-to-hand fight to the death between two native kings. One blood-curdling sequence that will have the movie-goers on the edge of their seats is where thousands of wild animals, frightened by a bush fire, stampede across the open plain directly in the path of the safari. Their thunderous hoofbeats and their furious speed make this one of the most thrilling sequences ever put on film; it leaves one exhausted.

Briefly, the story, which takes place in 1897, introduces Stewart Granger as a famous jungle guide who is engaged by Deborah Kerr, a wealthy British woman, to lead a safari into the uncharted African country to search for her husband, who had disappeared while trying to find the legendary King Solomon's mines. Accompanied by natives and by Richard Carlson, Deborah's brother, they set out for land that is feared by both natives and whites alike. They experience many harrowing encounters with wild savages and beasts in which their lives are constantly threatened, and in due time find themselves abandoned by all their frightened natives except one, a mysterious seven-foot tall fellow, who had joined the safari en route. He leads them to the legendary diamond mines, which they find guarded by a strange tribe of towering natives, whose King he claims to be; he had returned to wrest the kingdom from his evil cousin. Impressed by Stewart's guns, the evil king tricks Stewart and his party into entering a cave filled with diamonds, then seals the entrance. There they find the skeleton of Deborah's husband. They make a miraculous escape through an underground river and, with the help of their native friend, who had regained his kingdom in a battle to the death with his cousin, head for home. In the meantime, Stewart and Deborah had fallen in love.

It was produced by Sam Zimbalist, and directed by Compton Bennett and Andrew Marton, from a screen play by Helen Deutsch.

Suitable for the entire family.

"Dial 1119" with Marshall Thompson, Virginia Field and Andrea King

(MGM, November; time, 75 min.)

An unpleasant but tense psychological program thriller, revolving around a berserked escaped criminal who, obsessed with the idea of killing the police psychiatrist responsible for his being sent to a hospital for the criminal insane, holds five innocent hostages at bay in a barricaded tavern to accomplish his purpose. The story, which is more or less a character study of a mentally-deranged youth, played effectively by Marshall Thompson, is rather choppy and not too convincing, but it does generate considerable tension, particularly in the second half, where Thompson gives the police who had surrounded the tavern twenty-five minutes to send the psychiatrist to him lest he kill the five people he is holding at gunpoint. The suspense is heightened by the dilemma the police are faced with as a result of this ultimatum, and by the unsuccessful attempt made by Richard Rober, the police captain, to kill Thompson by sending an officer through an air-conditioning duct leading to the tavern. The closing sequences are highly melodramatic, with Sam Levene, the psychiatrist, bowing to Thompson's ultimatum and being killed by him as he tries to reason with him, and with Thompson himself mowed down by police bullets when one of his hostages gains the upper hand on him. A unique angle is the clever way in which the producer has employed television to keep Thompson informed of the police moves against him. This is accomplished by the

arrival of television cameras on the scene to report spot news, with Thompson watching the proceedings on the tavern's television set. A considerable part of the footage is given over to the introduction of the characters who become innocent hostages, including William Conrad, the tavern owner, whom Thompson kills; Keefe Brasselle, a young bartender concerned about his wife who is having a baby; Virginia Field, an attractive barfly; James Bell, a disillusioned newspaperman; and Andrea King, a discontented young woman about to go away on an illicit weekend with Leon Ames, a smooth-talking married man.

It was produced by Richard Goldstone and directed by Gerald Mayer from a screen play by John Monks, Jr., based on a story by Hugh King and Don McGuire.

Strictly adult fare.

"Big Timber" with Roddy McDowall and Jeff Donnell

(Monogram, Sept. 10; time, 73 min.)

Rather weak. It seems as if the picture was made for the main purpose of showing logging camp operations. In this, the picture succeeds, for such operations are instructive to those who have not been in a logging camp. But the story is very thin and hardly of much interest. The acting of Tom Greenway and of some of the other supporting players is "hammy." Even Jean Yarbrough's directorial skill could do nothing with them. The situation where Roddy McDowall drives a truck with defective brakes down a steep hill is thrilling. The photography is considerably dark:—

Seeking a job, Roddy arrives at a logging camp in the west, even though he knew nothing about logging; he had been told by Tom Greenway, whom he had known in Chicago, to come to the camp. Greenway helps him to obtain the job, and Roddy, eager to work but lacking knowledge, finds himself doing the wrong things most of the time. He is ribbed by the loggers but takes their jibes like a good sport. When Jeff Donnell, the commissary operator at the camp, pays considerable attention to Roddy, it arouses the jealousy of Ted Hecht, who is in love with her, and of Lyn Thomas, the camp superintendent's daughter, who found herself attracted to Roddy at first sight. Roddy is discharged when his work fails to improve, and on his last working day Gordon Jones, a co-worker, is injured seriously as a result of the careless handling of a tractor by Hecht. Roddy volunteers to drive Jones to a doctor in a truck, unaware that Hecht, in an effort to get Roddy out of the way of his love for Jeff, had tampered with the truck's brakes. As Roddy drives the truck down the steep mountain road the brakeless vehicle gathers terrific speed, but he negotiates the road by skillful driving and manages to get the injured man to the doctor in time to save his life. For this, Roddy, now a hero, wins back his job and gets the hand of Lyn, whom he loved secretly.

The picture was produced by Lindsley Parsons, and directed by Jean Yarbrough, from a screen play by Warren Wilson.

Harmless for family patrons.

"Cassino to Korea"

(Paramount, October; time, 58 min.)

This latest in the current cycle of documentary features is an interesting picture of its kind. Compiled from Paramount News clips and from official and captured enemy films, this documentary draws a parallel between the present fighting in Korea and the American campaign in Italy in 1943. Most of the footage is given over to the vicious battles that took place from the Cassino beachhead up to and beyond Rome, with emphasis placed on the destruction of the famed Cassino Monastery, which the Nazis used as a stronghold to halt the Allied advance. Worked into the film are the personal stories of two Congressional Medal of Honor winners—Sgt. James M. Logan, who routed a nest of German machine-gunners blocking the American advance, and Captain David Ludlum, an Air Force weather officer, whose accurate weather forecasts enabled the Americans to launch the attack that broke the Nazi resistance. Worked into the footage also are familiar clips of famous and infamous personalities who figured in the events that led to World War II, as well as in the postwar efforts for world peace through the United Nations. Included at the finish are some brief shots of the fighting in Korea.

The film should serve adequately as a supporting feature on a double bill. It was produced by A. J. Richards, directed by Edward Genock, and features a narration by Quentin Reynolds. The script treatment is by Max Klein.

"Between Midnight and Dawn"
with Mark Stevens, Edmond O'Brien
and Gale Storm

(Columbia, October; time, 89 min.)

This is a routine cops-and-robbers melodrama, handicapped by a creaky plot and by stilted dialogue; it leaves the spectator with the feeling of having seen the same thing many times previously. Its story about two policemen, buddies, in love with the same girl, and about their efforts to track down an escaped gangster, follows a formula treatment and lacks imagination. Some of the situations are far-fetched. It should, however, get by with the indiscriminating action fans, for it generates a fair share of suspense and excitement. The performances are adequate, considering the shortcomings of the script:—

Mark Stevens and Edmond O'Brien, close friends on and off duty, fall in love with Gale Storm, secretary to their superior officer, but Gale, whose father, a police lieutenant, had been murdered by a criminal, is determined not to fall in love with a policeman. She resists the advances of both but finally chooses the lighthearted Stevens. Having incurred a dislike for Donald Buka, a violent-tempered gangster who operated a night club, the boys are pleased when they capture him for the murder of a rival gangster and he is convicted and sentenced to death. On the night before Stevens and Gale are to be married, Buka escapes from jail and shoots Stevens dead as he cruises the streets with O'Brien in a prowler. O'Brien determines to capture Buka and, after many weeks, the killer is spotted going to the apartment of Gale Robbins, his girl-friend, a singer at the club. The police surround the building and order Buka to surrender. Just then a neighbor's child comes to visit Miss Robbins. Buka grabs the child and threatens to drop her to the street below unless the police withdraw and permit him to escape. While the police retreat, O'Brien crawls along the ledge of the apartment building, throws a tear gas bomb into the apartment, and jumps in after it. In the ensuing gunfight, both Miss Robbins and Buka are killed and the child saved. The picture ends with the suggestion that Gale and O'Brien will find happiness together.

It was produced by Hunt Stromberg and directed by Gordon Douglas from a screen play by Eugene Ling, based on a story by Gerald Drayson Adams and Leo Katcher. Unobjectionable morally.

**"I'll Get By" with June Haver,
Gloria De Haven and William Lundigan**

(20th Century-Fox, October; time, 83 min.)

Although its backstage story and romantic involvements stick too close to familiar formulas, "I'll Get By" is a tuneful Technicolor musical that should prove acceptable to the rank and file. The music is the rewarding thing about this picture, which is about the song publishing business, for it features many nostalgic songs that were highly popular during the period from 1939 to 1945, and all are put over effectively by the singing principals. Dennis Day's comedy antics give the proceedings a considerable lift, as does the trumpet playing of Harry James. An exploitable angle is the guest appearances that are made by Jeanne Crain, Dan Dailey (featured in a song-and-dance number), Victor Mature and Reginald Gardner:—

Unable to have a song he had written published, William Lundigan, a song-plugger, decides to go into the music publishing business on his own. The venture proves unsuccessful and, just as he is about to fold up, Dennis Day, an aspiring songwriter from Texas, comes along with a song and with enough money to have it published. Lundigan makes him a partner. The song is a flop, but Day, undismayed, saves the situation by inducing June Haver and Gloria de Haven, a popular singing team, to put over the song with Harry James and his band. Before long the partnership becomes highly successful as a direct result of June's and Gloria's aid. Meanwhile June and Lundigan fall in love, while Day pursues Gloria to no avail. When the girls head for an engagement in Hollywood, the boys follow to open a west coast office. Lundigan, to help June land a possible movie contract, arranges for her to introduce a new Gershwin song at a forthcoming benefit for the Free French. Day, unaware of this arrangement, agrees to let Jeanne Crain introduce the song when she requests it. This leads to a misunderstanding and break between June and Lundigan. World War II breaks out, and the boys join the Marines and are shipped overseas. Shortly thereafter, June learns that Lundigan was not to blame. Everything turns out for the best when the girls join a USO unit to entertain troops and reconcile with the boys at a South Pacific base.

It was produced by William Perlberg and directed by Richard Sale, who wrote the screen play with Mary Loos, based on a story by Robert Ellis, Helen Logan and Pamela Harris. The cast includes Thelma Ritter and others.

Harmless for the family.

**"Chain Gang" with Douglas Kennedy
and Marjorie Lord**

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 70 min.)

The question in the case of this picture is, not that it is a poor entertainment, but whether it should have been produced at all. Revolving around a crusading reporter's efforts to expose a ruthless chain gang system, the story is completely artificial and unbelievable, and the direction and acting amateurish. It is, in fact, a harrowing picture because of the excessive brutality depicted in the inhumane treatment of prisoners. The picture so distorts prison conditions in the United States that the Johnston Office should see to it that it is not distributed in foreign countries lest it be used by our enemies for anti-U. S. propaganda purposes:—

Douglas Kennedy and Marjorie Lord, reporters on rival papers, love each other, although Thurston Hall, her rich and influential stepfather, does not approve. Crusading against the chain gang prison system in his state, Kennedy arranges to obtain a job as a prison guard to collect evidence for an expose. Using an assumed name and armed with a tiny camera in the shape of a cigarette lighter, Kennedy is accepted as a legitimate guard by Emory Parnell, the ruthless captain at the prison. He secretly photographs the torture undergone by the convicts, and when the pictures are published they disturb Hall, who unbeknownst to his stepdaughter had accumulated his wealth by the crooked use of chain gang labor. She discovers this and leaves him. Before Kennedy can wind up his assignment, his identity is discovered by one of Hall's henchmen and brought to Parnell's attention. Parnell orders the other guards to give Kennedy a merciless beating. Just then a convict escapes, and Kennedy, taking advantage of the confusion, escapes himself, but he is felled by a bullet and left for dead. With the aid of the escaped convict, whom he had once befriended, he makes his way to safety, and his undercover work proves to be a vital factor in the subsequent outlawing of chain gangs.

It was produced by Sam Katzman and directed by Lew Landers from a screen play by Howard J. Green.

Too brutal for the family.

ANOTHER BOOST FOR CHILL WILLS

Clarence Golder, owner-manager of the Civic Center Theatre in Great Falls, Montana, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Independent Theatre Owners of Montana, has sent the following communication to this paper:

"Chill Wills did the finest job of public relations for me at the Civic Center Theatre in Great Falls, Montana, that I ever have experienced in thirty years of show business. Not since the late Will Rogers, whom Chill resembles in appearance and action, has such an 'Ambassador of Good Will' represented the Motion Picture Industry. He is a great master of ceremonies and a natural humorist. He never misses an opportunity to make a friend for the theatre at which he is appearing, for the exhibitor, and as a matter of fact for the entire industry. His familiar 'Hello, cousin' has a heartwarming effect on those with whom he comes in contact, and wins him many friends. In no time he has an audience eating out of his hands. The kids love him; the adults love him;—he's terrific.

"They are still talking about Chill Wills in Great Falls. He did free shows for the orphans, blind school, a baseball banquet, a Shrine dance, and at three night clubs. Chill appeared at the Civic Center Theatre last May 4-5-6 in conjunction with the Eagle Lion production, 'The Sundowners,' in which he is featured. He also appeared at the Falls Motor Vu Theatre with which I am affiliated.

"What this industry needs today is more Chill Wills to get out and resell this great entertainment medium to the people connected with it and to the public in general. This is what Chill Wills is trying to do. He is personally sold on the Motion Picture Industry, and in my opinion, one of the industry's best public relations men, if not the greatest. In the near future I predict that Chill will be where he belongs:—'on top the heap.' The role of doing Will Rogers' life story on the screen could help put him on top. He is a natural for this role, and he is deserving of it since he lives the role in every day life. I suggest that you get acquainted with Chill Wills yourself;—book him for a personal appearance and reap from the good-will he will bring you.

"Give us more Chill Wills."

"The committee felt one of the great wastes in production budgets is the unwarranted salaries asked by secondary stock players who have no drawing power at the boxoffice. New, fresh personalities would give a picture a certain 'lift' at less cost.

"As exhibitors we realize the importance of encouraging experimental pictures such as *THE SNAKE PIT*, *JOHNNY BELINDA* and *THE NEXT VOICE YOU HEAR*. BUT, we urge that production experiments, such as these, have small budgets. Huge budgets for pictures that have doubtful boxoffice qualities are hazardous and when they fail financially other producers point to such experimentation as a failure. It is also true that large budgets make for greater demands by sales departments. A financially unsuccessful picture of an experimental nature can always be liquidated by us because top playing time will not be expected. We cannot afford to ruin preferred playing time at a loss.

"Drive-In theatres give important revenue to Hollywood. These outdoor operators want more close-ups and fewer distant shots. They want a minimum of dark shadowy scenes and no scenes set in fog such as *BATTLEGROUNDS*. Good color is very valuable.

"The committee recommends that all studios consider a program of educating studio personnel (especially those in the public eye) as to their responsibilities of both good behavior and citizenship.

"Our committee was enthusiastic about the possibility of COMPO bringing a new era of close cooperation between Production-Distribution and Exhibition. All members of the committee felt that Production could make huge strides by utilizing the knowledge the exhibitors have from being close to the actual theatre ticket buyer. The reverse is also true. Exhibitors who are now critical and belligerent would do well in having a closer insight to production problems. Our committee was enthusiastic about the possibility of the Seminars to be conducted by COMPO late this fall.

"FINALLY in summation this committee listed pictures that are a matter of pride to all exhibitors everywhere: *BATTLEGROUNDS*, *CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN*, *FATHER OF THE BRIDE*, *THE BROKEN ARROW*, *ANNIE GET YOUR GUN*, *THE MEN*, *ROCKETSHIP XM*, *TEA FOR TWO*, *ALL THE KING'S MEN*, *CINDERELLA*, *THE FLAME AND THE ARROW*, *TREASURES ISLAND*, *FRANCIS*, *DESTINATION MOON*, *SANDS OF IWO JIMA*, *WINCHESTER '75*, to name only a few. With releases such as these there is nothing basically wrong with our industry.

"We do, however, urgently request: (1) a more orderly release of a variety of types of pictures; (2) fewer bad titles; and (3) less crime, murder and psychos."

The Film Rental Committee's report contained the following recommendations:

"We recommend the formation in each exchange center of a committee of three . . . and alternates to investigate any and all distress theatre situations involving members which may be brought to their attention. The duties of the committee will be to thoroughly analyze the complaint involved and determine its merits. If the complaint is justified and the distress is apparently caused by excessive film rentals, the committee shall call upon the exhibitor to furnish a certified public accountant's statement to corroborate the facts of his complaint. Using this information as a basis, the committee shall call upon each film company involved attempting to secure proper adjustments. Lacking cooperation locally, the committee shall submit the case to the Association's executive office for submission to the General Sales Manager.

"If the committee finds that in addition to excessive film rentals the distress is due in part to lack of showmanship and/or poor physical operation, it shall assist with any means at its disposal in correcting these problems.

"We further recommend that the Department of Commerce of the United States be requested to prepare a report for guidance of our members, showing percentage of the expense items and profit in relation to grosses applicable to proper conduct of motion picture theatres. In the event that the Department of Commerce should decline to render this service, then a nationally known statistical organization be retained. This analysis shall include grosses from \$250.00 to \$5,000.00 per week.

"We reaffirm the resolution unanimously adopted at the convention at Sun Valley in 1949 pertaining to the improper handling of film bids. The evils previously condemned are still in existence. We suggest that a representa-

tive of the PCCITO meet with representatives of the film companies to correct the abuses now practiced."

MARTIN AND LEWIS RECANT

The vigorous protests made last week by spokesmen of different industry groups against the Dean Martin-Jerry Lewis television skit that ridiculed the efforts of exhibitors to attract patrons have had a sobering effect on the comedians, who issued the following statement to the press at the week end:—

"We have read in the trade press and have received copies of exhibitors' telegrams complaining about our appearance Sunday evening, September 17, in the TV sketch of attendance at a movie theatre.

"Odd as it may seem, it never occurred to us that this material would be construed as injurious to the industry. Had we thought so, we never would have performed it.

"As you know, we are relatively new to motion pictures and are equally new to television and radio. Our principal experience has been in the intimate atmosphere of night clubs and personal appearances where satire is always accepted in good fun and without complaint. We now realize, however, that such is not always the case with respect to radio, television or movies which reach vast audiences.

"We regret, exceedingly, this incident and wish to assure the exhibitors that it will not happen again."

Having realized their mistake and having been big enough to admit it and to give assurances that it will not happen again, Martin and Lewis deserve forgiveness. Any thoughts the exhibitors may have had about reprisals should be forgotten.

FAVORABLE NEWSPAPER PUBLICITY

In its September 9 issue this paper reproduced from the *Hollywood Reporter* a powerful statement on what all freedom-loving people are faced with as a result of Russian aggression. This statement, under the heading, "Let Us Make No Mistake About it," was signed by Cecil B. de Mille, Y. Frank Freeman, Samuel Goldwyn, Louis B. Mayer, Joseph M. Schenck, Albert, Harry M. and Jack L. Warner, John Wayne and Darryl F. Zanuck.

The statement was so well written and so enlightening that this paper urged its exhibitor readers to bring it to the attention of their local newspaper editors as an example of the fact that an important segment of Hollywood's top brass is aware to the responsibilities imposed on them by good citizenship.

Following through on this suggestion, Mr. Ellison Loth, head of The Waynesboro Theatres Corporation, of Waynesboro, Virginia, and Mr. A. A. Holler, assistant manager of the Fenray Photoplay Company, operators of the Fenray and Elzane Theatres in Martins Ferry, Ohio, have sent to this office tear sheets from their local newspapers, each of which reproduced the statement in full as the leading editorial feature on their editorial pages in their issues of September 18, with each giving full credit to the signers.

The Waynesboro *News-Virginian*, in an editor's note, said partly that it "has repeatedly urged all-out mobilization for possible World War III . . . economic and military," and that it was reproducing the statement "because it emphasizes the seriousness of our present situation."

The Martins Ferry *Times-Leader* had this to say in part:

"Brought to our attention the other day was an advertisement . . . signed and paid for by 10 of Hollywood's top picture people. . . .

"We feel it pictures about as clearly as anything written recently what lies in store for Americans over the next decade. We disagree with some of the wording of the last paragraph of the piece in which it is alleged . . . our Government has seen the Russian danger and knows full well how boldly and rapidly we must act. . . . They possibly see it now, but five years or so ago they certainly didn't or we wouldn't be in this position, and steps currently being undertaken won't halt the inflation which is proving so disastrous to the economy we hope will provide the physical needs to meet the crisis.

"We feel the American people are considerably ahead of the administration in their thinking and in their realization of the necessary steps to avoid slavery. That thinking is certainly reflected in the article prepared for the movie moguls, and so we pass it along. . . ."

Entered as second-class matter January 4, 1921, at the post office at New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879.

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No. 40

THE ALLIED CONVENTION

In an effort to eliminate competitive bidding between independent exhibitors, National Allied's board of directors, meeting prior to the organization's three-day annual convention held in Pittsburgh this week, directed Abram F. Myers, its general counsel, to meet with representatives of the defendant distributors in the New York anti-trust case to discuss ways and means of arriving at a more equitable interpretation of the words "or others" in the anti-discrimination clause of the final decree.

Myers contends that the words in question, construed in the light of the pleadings, evidence and findings in the case, warrant resort to competitive bidding only on the application of an independent exhibitor competing on a run with an affiliated or large circuit theatre that is wrongly seeking to corral the product. Myers contends further that, since the independent theatres were not parties to the suit there is nothing in the decree that requires competitive bidding where two independents are competing for product, and that the major distributors are wrongfully interpreting the decree to their own advantage when they call for bidding in such situations. The imposition of bidding in such cases serves to boost film rentals by setting the exhibitors against one another.

Failing to come to an agreement with the distributors in this matter, Myers was authorized by the Board to take the matter up with the Department of Justice.

Another action taken by the Board was to extend Allied's membership in COMPO for another year.

Among the many highlights of the convention were the personal appearances of four major distributor sales managers, including William F. Rodgers, MGM; Andy W. Smith, Jr., 20th Century-Fox; Alfred W. Schwalberg, Paramount; and Robert Mochrie, RKO. Each made an effective talk to the delegates present, and each submitted himself voluntarily to questions from the convention floor.

Rodgers, among other matters, took up the problem of competitive bidding and emphasized that his company had not invited the procedure. "It has been followed," he said, "only because we know of no other method to satisfy competing interests who are seeking the same position as to product and its availability. We do invite, however, any ideas or suggestions for any other plan of procedure that will have as an objective the same principles desired by those who are seeking something they heretofore have not enjoyed and to which they believe they are entitled."

He pointed out that a condition of overbidding exists in some situations, and that, though his company deplors such a condition, "the competing interests often do not favor a solution and have repeatedly refused our overtures to make our product available in some equitable manner." He warned that unless these situations discontinue overbidding, his company may find it necessary to refuse to consider such bids "to protect such erring participants from themselves."

"Generally," said Rodgers, "the complaints about bidding come from those who, in the past, may not have appreciated the rights of others and who may have enjoyed a priority that now, under the decree, they may not continue to receive. On the other hand, many competitive theatres have been successful in securing product they long claimed they should have the right to compete for. . . . We expect to continue to offer our product in the fairest manner we know how and that is in free and open competition, regardless of personalities, affiliations or buying power and in doing so we are not going to be deterred by those who, because of this, accuse us of being unfriendly."

Rodgers revealed that out of 450 situations now bidding competitively for MGM product, 200 involve affiliated or former affiliated theatres in competition with independents. Of 10,522 pictures involved, 5,396 have been awarded to independents, 4,431 to the affiliates, and 695 were not sold. In 147 situations where bidding is between representative independent circuits and individual independent theatres, and where 6,251 pictures were involved, 3,016 were awarded to the individuals, 2,716 to the circuits, and 519 were not sold. In 94 situations where two independents were bidding against each other, and where 3,803 pictures were involved, the division was 1,902 pictures in one instance, 1,746 in the other instance, and 155 pictures unsold. "This record," declared Rodgers, "speaks for itself."

Elsewhere in his talk, Rodgers urged greater attendance at tradeshow; asked that drive-in operators avoid the adoption of free admissions, threatening to decline to do business with such offenders; and asked for complete support of COMPO.

To complaints from the floor about the forcing of unwanted pictures, Rodgers stated flatly that, if it can be proved that an MGM man forced a picture, that man would be discharged immediately. "That goes for me, too," he added.

Andy W. Smith, Jr., in his talk, offered exhibitors in small towns and outlying areas away from distribution centers a license agreement covering a full season's product to facilitate their bookings. Smith defined these theatres as those that have a limited ability to gross; that operate in many instances for less than a full week, even one night; and that are for the most part actually operated by the exhibitor and his family, thus giving them limited opportunity to visit the exchange center and make deals for pictures. Although salesmen are sent to these situations as often as possible, said Smith, the procedure is costly and has had its disadvantages for both the exhibitor and his company.

Stating that the license agreement will cover product released from September 1, 1950 through August 31, 1951, Smith said that the standard form of contract will be employed and, in addition to the regular clauses, there will be three riders, the first stating the number of feature pictures involved, the second protecting the exhibitor's right to can-

(Continued on back page)

"The Jackpot" with James Stewart and Barbara Hale

(20th Century-Fox, November; time, 85 min.)

Hilarious is the word for this rollicking comedy, which satirizes the problems that beset an easygoing, moderately successful family man when he becomes the winner of a huge jackpot prize on a radio giveaway show. It is an uproarious romp from start to finish, with rapid-fire laugh situations that are sure to hit the mass audience right smack in its composite funnybone. The comedy stems from the fact that, having won \$24,000 in assorted merchandise, the hero discovers that the prizes are taxable to the tune of \$7,000, a debt he is unable to meet. His frenzied efforts to raise the tax money by selling some of the prizes get him into jams that will leave the spectator weak from laughter. James Stewart is ideal as the bewildered hero; his performance is one of his best light-comedy jobs. Barbara Hale is just right as his wife, and there is competent support from James Gleason, Alan Mowbray and Patricia Medina in lesser roles. Credit is due Walter Lang, the director, for his expert handling of the story material and of the players, for in less competent hands the whole farce might have collapsed into silly nonsense. As it is, he has fashioned a comedy that is fresh, wholesome and good fun:—

Stewart, a minor executive in a small-town department store, lives in a modest home with his wife and two children. When he receives a call from a radio network informing him that he will be called that night as a contestant in a quiz program, he thinks at first that it is a gag, but he learns that the call was genuine and, after much fretting and the help of several friends, comes up with the correct answer. Within a few days he starts to receive a vast assortment of merchandise from home freezers to diamond rings, all of which clutters up his home and his lawn. In addition, Alan Mowbray, a famous interior decorator, arrives to redecorate his home, and Patricia Medina, a comely French artist, comes to paint his portrait in oil. Stewart's elation subsides considerably when he learns that the prizes are subject to an income tax of \$7,000. He decides to sell some of the merchandise and, on the advice of James Gleason, a newspaperman pal, goes to Chicago to sell a diamond ring to a big-time gambler. He meets the gambler in a bookie joint just as it is raided and is taken into custody. The police try unsuccessfully to make him admit that the gambler is his "fence" before they free him. Returning home, Stewart finds that he had been fired for selling his prizes to customers in the store, and that his wife suspected him of having an affair with Patricia, whom he had been visiting secretly; Barbara did not know that Stewart, as a surprise, had arranged with Patricia to paint her portrait from a photograph. With Stewart and Barbara on the verge of parting, it all comes to a happy ending when Patricia delivers the painting, and when the gambler, appreciating the way Stewart had protected him, sends him enough money for the ring to meet the income tax problem.

It was produced by Samuel G. Engel from a screen play by Phoebe and Henry Ephron, based on an article in *The New Yorker* by John McNulty.

Excellent for the family.

"Rocky Mountain" with Errol Flynn and Patrice Wymore

(Warner Bros., Nov. 11; time, 83 min.)

A fairly interesting western-type melodrama. The story, which is a mixture of moods and tension, is well written and differs from the usual plot formulas employed in pictures of this kind, but it may not be relished by the western picture addicts, for it is given more to talk than to action, with almost the entire proceedings taking place within the confines of a rocky peak in the middle of the California desert. But the lack of excitement in the early reels is more than made up for at the finish, where the hero and his men, though hopelessly outnumbered, make a wild charge against attacking Indians and are killed to a man by the shrieking savages. It is one of the most exciting Indian battles ever

staged. The direction and acting are competent, and the photography exceptionally fine:—

Under orders of Gen. Robert E. Lee, Errol Flynn leads a small band of Confederate soldiers to California to keep a rendezvous with a band of outlaws in a daring scheme to gain control of the West for the Confederacy. While waiting for the outlaws on a rocky plateau in the desert, Flynn and his men drive off a band of Indians attacking a stage-coach and rescue Patrice Wymore. Flynn gives her sanctuary and learns that she was on her way to the coast to meet Scott Forbes, her fiance, an officer in the Union army. When Forbes and a scouting party of three soldiers and three Indians come looking for Patrice, Flynn captures them. One of the Indians escape and before long smoke spires rise from the surrounding hills indicating an impending Indian attack. Forbes asks Flynn to allow him to escort Patrice to the safety of a garrison 60 miles distant, promising to return, but Flynn refuses. Later, Forbes escapes alone. Meanwhile Flynn and Patrice are mutually attracted. The Indians eventually break out of the hills for the attack, and Flynn, to save Patrice, decides to lead his patrol away in full sight of the Indians so as to lure them away and give Patrice a chance to escape. Finding themselves boxed in a canyon, Flynn and his men wheel about and make a wild but hopeless charge against the redskins. All are killed. Forbes, returning with a patrol, discovers the massacre. He directs his men to raise the Confederate flag on the spot as a tribute to the rebels' gallantry.

It was produced by William Jacobs and directed by William Keighley from a story by Alan LeMay, who wrote the screen play with Winston Miller.

Suitable for the family.

"To Please a Lady" with Clark Gable, Barbara Stanwyck and Adolphe Menjou

(MGM, October; time, 91 min.)

This auto racing melodrama should go over well with the rank and file. The story is thin and contrived, but it is fast-moving, exciting and romantic, providing the kind of entertainment the masses have always enjoyed. Moreover, Clark Gable, as a tough but dashing devil-may-care racing driver, and Barbara Stanwyck, as a powerful syndicated columnist who almost ruins him before they fall in love, are cast in the type of roles that should delight their fans. A good part of the footage is given over to auto racing, and its depiction of the dangers and hazards of the sport, with its smash-ups and sudden death, make for many thrills. One sequence, which is devoted to death-defying auto stunts, is highly exciting. The big event, of course, is the Memorial Day 500-mile race at Indianapolis Speedway:—

Gable, an expert but reckless driver in midget races, is decidedly unpopular with the racing crowd because of his ruthless tactics on the track. He is rude to Barbara when she interviews him, and later, when he causes the death of another driver, she brands him as a murderer in her column. The resultant publicity bans him from every midget race track. Risking his neck, he goes in for stunt driving and soon earns enough money to buy a big racing car. Barbara keeps in touch with his activities and, though she resents him, soon realizes that she is in love with him, a fact she unsuccessfully tries to hide from Adolphe Menjou, her confidante and aide. Gable, too, is attracted to her, but their budding romance travels a rocky road because of their failure to understand each other. Meanwhile Gable wins fame and fortune as a big-car driver and qualifies for the Indianapolis classic. Shortly thereafter, when a shady business man commits suicide because of the publicity given to his dealings in Barbara's column, Barbara realizes that she is as much a killer as Gable even though neither meant to kill. She rushes to Indianapolis to reconcile with him. During the race, Gable, though in the lead, sacrifices victory and endangers his own life to save another driver from a collision, thus convincing Barbara that he had changed his ways.

It was produced and directed by Clarence Brown from a story and screen play by Barre Lyndon and Marge Decker.

Adult fare.

"Wyoming Mail" with Stephen McNally, Alexis Smith and Howard da Silva

(Univ.-Int'l, October; time, 87 min.)

A good Technicolor outdoor action melodrama. Set in the Wyoming Territory shortly after the Civil War, at a time when the railroads took over the transportation of the U. S. Mails from the stagecoaches, its story about a secret government agent's efforts to track down a gang of train robbers has plenty of two-fisted action, gunplay and well-sustained suspense to satisfy those who enjoy western-type film fare. The idea of the hero posing as a criminal to get in with the gang is not novel, but as presented in the incident-packed script it holds one's interest throughout. The direction and acting are competent, the production quality good, and the outdoor photography effective:—

When Roy Roberts, district supervisor, is unable to halt a series of holdups on mail cars traveling through the Wyoming territory, the Government enlists the services of Stephen McNally, a war hero, and sends him to Cheyenne as a secret agent to follow up a lead supplied by the local telegrapher. McNally arrives minutes after his informant is shot dead, and he traces the murder to Ed Begley, warden of a prison nearby. In Cheyenne, McNally meets and is attracted to Alexis Smith, a saloon songstress. Shortly thereafter, he arranges to have himself imprisoned as an escaped bank robber. There he meets Whit Bissell, a convict, who supplies him with leads to the gang, with which Begley had a connection. Armando Silvestre, an Indian guide and McNally's outside contact, effects his escape from prison. Following Bissell's leads, McNally gets himself accepted by the gang and learns that it is headed by Howard da Silva, who worked as a mail train guard. He is shocked to learn also that Alexis, too, worked with the gang. When plans for another holdup are made, McNally sends the Indian to telegraph the authorities. The dispatcher, a secret member of the gang, shoots down the Indian when he reveals McNally's identity, and sends Alexis to warn the gang. But Alexis, desiring to turn straight, warns McNally and offers to help him. Da Silva learns of the doublecross and prepares to dispose of both Alexis and McNally. But McNally narrowly escapes from the gang and, after much gunplay, prevents the robbery, captures the culprits, unmasks Roberts as the gang's mastermind, and rescues Alexis. McNally wins a pardon for Alexis to avoid spending their honeymoon in jail.

It was produced by Aubrey Schenck and directed by Reginald Le Borg from a screen play by Harry Essex and Leonard Lee, based on a story by Robert H. Andrews.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Woman on the Run" with Ann Sheridan and Dennis O'Keefe

(Univ.-Int'l, October; time, 77 min.)

Although it is cut from a more or less conventional story pattern and is somewhat far-fetched, this murder mystery melodrama should prove acceptable to theatre-goers generally. Revolving around a manhunt for a missing witness to a gangland murder, it has a fair share of excitement and suspense, crisp dialogue, and moves along at a steady pace. The killer's identity becomes known to the audience early in the proceedings, but this serves to heighten the suspense since he, posing as a reporter, had won the confidence of Ann Sheridan, the missing man's wife, and was using her blind friendship in an effort to dispose of her husband. The closing scenes, where the killer stalks Ann's husband in an amusement park while she, trapped on a scenic railway, is unable to warn him, hold one tense. The authentic San Francisco backgrounds give the film a semi-documentary flavor:—

While walking his dog, Ross Elliott witnesses the fatal shooting of a shady character and is shot at himself by the fleeing murderer. The police arrive seconds later, and Elliott, frightened but unharmed, tells them that he could identify the murderer in a line-up, but not wishing to become involved he sneaks away. Determined to find Elliott, Inspector

Robert Keith tries to enlist the aid of Ann Sheridan, Elliott's wife who, on the verge of divorcing him, refuses to cooperate out of a belief that her husband had run away from her. Keith informs Ann that Elliott is suffering from a dangerous heart malady—a fact she confirms—and must take certain pills. Realizing that she must find Elliott and give him a supply of pills, Ann, eluding the police, tries to track him down. She is aided by Dennis O'Keefe, a reporter, who offers to pay her \$1,000 if she will lead him to her husband for an exclusive interview. A cryptic letter received from Elliott not only tells Ann that he is hiding out at a beach amusement park but that he wants to live only if she cared for him, thus convincing her that he still loved her. Meanwhile it develops that O'Keefe himself is the killer when he murders a Chinese girl who unwittingly possessed a clue that could lead to him. He accompanies Ann to the beach and arranges with her to tell Elliott to meet him under the scenic railway ramp. As Elliott goes to meet O'Keefe, Ann boards a roller coaster and, recalling a remark dropped by O'Keefe, realizes that he is the killer and that he planned to murder Elliott to get him out of the way. After a tortuous ride, she rushes to warn her husband only to find that the police, having discovered that O'Keefe is the murderer, had arrived in time to kill him and rescue Elliott.

It was produced by Howard Welsch, and directed by Norman Foster, who wrote the screen play with Alan Campbell, based on a story by Sylvia Tate.

Adult fare.

"The Miniver Story" with Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon

(MGM, October; time, 104 min.)

As a general rule, sequels to highly successful works rarely match the quality of the original, and this rule seems to hold true in the case of "The Miniver Story." It is an out and out tear-jerker, with a number of tender passages and a somewhat sad ending, but unlike "Mrs. Miniver," its predecessor, the story's effect on one's emotions is not deep because of its blatantly theatrical quality. It may go over with women whose emotions are stirred easily, but most picture-goers will probably find it disappointing, for the story is synthetic, the continuity uneven, the characterizations unconvincing, the pace tedious, and the acting so attitudinized that many of the scenes strike a pompous and false note. Its box-office success will depend on the fame of the original and on the drawing power of the stars.

Opening on V-E Day in London, the story depicts a pallid Mrs. Miniver (Greer Garson) rejoicing in a victory celebration with an American colonel (John Hodiak), who admits his love for her prior to his departure for home. In due time she welcomes home from service overseas Clem (Walter Pidgeon), her husband, and Judy (Cathy O'Donnell), her daughter, but does not reveal to them that she is ill and had been given at the most one year to live. She determines to devote her remaining months to adjusting their problems. Clem, an architect, finds war-torn London depressing and wants to accept an assignment in Brazil. A more important problem is Judy, who spurns the love of Tom Foley (Richard Gale), a wholesome local lad, because of her infatuation for a married brigadier general (Leo Genn). Mrs. Miniver visits the brigadier and dissuades him from getting a divorce to marry Judy by convincing him that he is still in love with his wife. Judy, angered by her mother's interference, sees the light when Mrs. Miniver shows her a letter from Hodiak in which he points out that he is happily married and that the love he had felt for her was spurious, the result of a wartime kinship. With Judy's problem solved, Mrs. Miniver's happiness is complete when her husband decides to remain in England. She then tells him of her condition. Heartbroken, he does his utmost to make her remaining days happy and comfortable, and she lives long enough to see her daughter marry young Foley.

It was produced by Sidney Franklin and directed by H. C. Potter from a screen play by Ronald Millar and George Froeschel.

Suitable for the family.

cel, and the third stating that the licensing of one picture is not conditioned upon the licensing of another. The use of this form of contract will be optional with the exhibitor. Individual forms of contracts for each picture will be made available to those who prefer to deal on that basis.

"Each of our branch managers," said Smith, "is being requested by me to furnish a list of the theatres in his exchange area which he feels qualifies for service under our plan.

"... our salesmen will be in a position to state by title, and in many instances, the names of the producer and director, stars and leading players, as to each picture to be served.

"Our plan for rental is to establish with each customer film rental terms to be paid for different classifications of pictures. We propose 3 classifications which shall be 1, 2 and 3 and with a stipulated rental agreement for each picture in each classification.

"In the case of classification No. 1, that may be made up in whole or in part of percentage pictures. It is our belief, however, that for the kind of theatres we plan to serve under this arrangement, that there must be a very limited number of percentage pictures.

"Pictures will be discussed with our customer picture by picture, and an agreement mutually arrived at will be written up with a stipulated number of pictures that fall in each classification. These pictures will not be designated by title."

Smith added that his company will proceed with the immediate operation of the plan, and that for the present it will be considered as being "in a state of being tested," with its continuance depending on how satisfactory it proves to the exhibitors as well as the company.

Alfred W. Schwalberg, in his address, paid tribute to Allied's efforts to solve industry problems, and assured the Allied leaders that he would willingly join hands with them in any plan to bring about a better exhibitor-distributor understanding.

Robert Mochrie, in his talk, urged the exhibitors to exploit pictures more fully, and to give new talent a break by not refusing pictures because it doesn't have names.

He also outlined RKO's new policy of selling "A" pictures on a flat rental basis to theatres that gross in the \$200 to \$300 class.

Like Bill Rodgers, Mochrie, as well as Smith and Schwalberg, said that, upon proper proof, their companies stand ready to cancel any picture that had been forced on an exhibitor.

The various film buying clinics held in connection with the convention were most constructive, according to the reports submitted by the different moderators at the closing session. Trueman Rembusch, Allied's president, said that these clinics will become an integral part of all future Allied conventions.

Col. H. A. Cole, co-ordinator of the film clinic activities, reported that the two main developments to come out of the seminars were complaints that the distributors were still forcing pictures, and exhibitor fears of reprisal if they voiced their grievances. Based on Cole's report, the delegates adopted unanimously a resolution calling upon the distributors to provide dated worksheets to be signed and left with the exhibitor by the salesman after having offered or tentatively worked out any deals. These worksheets, said Cole, will provide an exhibitor with the necessary proof in the event a salesman tried to force a picture on him.

Questioned by Cole on the matter, Schwalberg immediately agreed to supply the worksheets, but Mochrie and Smith asked for additional time to study it. Bill Rodgers, however, saw little merit in the plan and explained that it would interfere with efficient and economic selling.

Other convention highlights included the keynote address by Charles Niles, of Iowa-Nebraska, who urged the dele-

gates to take action on the exorbitant film rental demands of the distributors; an appearance by Gene Autry, who defended his right to make films for television and cited figures to prove that the exhibitors had not permitted him to make a fair profit on his films for theatres; a talk by Arthur L. Mayer, COMPO's executive vice-president, who explained COMPO's objectives and urged the exhibitors to give it a fair trial; the adoption of a resolution, after spirited debate, directing Allied's Board to study the advisability of a plan for cooperative buying of equipment supplies and candy for such Allied units as desire to avail themselves of it; a brief appearance by Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis to express their regrets for their recent television skit ridiculing the theatres, a gesture that was enthusiastically applauded by the convention delegates; a talk by Mr. Myers, who took up the matter of competitive bidding between independent exhibitors, and told the delegates of the Board's decision to press for a solution to the problem; and a typical militant speech by Bennie Berger, North Central Allied president, who castigated the distributors for their percentage selling policies which, he said, takes so much out of the gross that it kills the incentive of the exhibitor to get out and sell the picture.

"State Secret" with Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. and Glynis Johns

(Columbia, October; time, 97 min.)

A very good British-made chase melodrama. It is a lively, intriguing thriller that takes place in an unnamed Balkan country and revolves around an American surgeon who finds himself marked for death because of his knowledge that the country's ruthless dictator had died—an explosive state secret that jeopardized the future of the ruling regime. His escape from the authorities makes for a highly exciting chase, one that never flags in interest, pace and suspense because of the many hair-raising adventures experienced by the hero and by a pert music-hall performer who comes to his aid. Some nice touches of humor are worked into the proceedings. Photographed in Italy, the street-by-street man-hunt, climaxed by a climb over a steep mountain, provides the film with highly interesting backgrounds. The direction and acting are excellent:—

Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., an American surgeon, is invited to a dictator-controlled Balkan country on the pretext of receiving a medical award. Upon arriving he agrees to demonstrate a delicate operation he had perfected, and in the midst of the operation he discovers that the patient is none other than the dictator himself. The dictator dies as a result of the surgery, whereupon Jack Hawkins, the secret police head, decides that Fairbanks must be "liquidated" to prevent word of the dictator's death from leaking out to the people prior to the elections. Fairbanks escapes from the palace and takes refuge from the police-filled streets in a theatre. Backstage, he corners Glynis Johns, a singer, and persuades her to hide him. When Fairbanks is recognized by a fellow-performer who notifies the police, Glynis, now involved, is compelled to flee with him. Together they manage to black-mail Herbert Lom, a notorious black-marketeer, into helping them to escape. They travel part of the way by river barge and thence by foot over perilous mountains to elude border guards who had been alerted to prevent them from leaving the country. They are captured just as they approach the border, and Hawkins once again makes plans for the "liquidation." But just as he gets set to execute Fairbanks the radio blares the news that the dictator had been assassinated. Actually, the murdered man was a double, whom Hawkins had been utilizing to cover up the death of the actual dictator. Public knowledge of the dictator's death leaves Hawkins with no reason to "liquidate" Fairbanks and Glynis who, now in love, are permitted to leave the country together for a happier life.

It is a Frank Launder-Sidney Gilliat production, produced, directed and written by Mr. Gilliat.

Unobjectionable morally.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXXII

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No. 40

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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Allied Artists Features

(1560 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

(Distribution through Monogram)

16 There's a Girl in My Heart—Knox-Bowman-Jean.	Jan.
17 Southside 1-1000—DeFore-King	Nov. 12
18 Short Grass—Cameron-Downs	Dec. 3

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

1949-50

237 The Good Humor Man—Carson-Albright	June
233 Fortunes of Captain Blood—Hayward	June
251 Hoedown—Eddy Arnold	June
266 Texas Dynamo—Charles Starrett (54 m.)	June 1
202 State Penitentiary—Baxter-Stevens	June 8
243 Rogues of Sherwood Forest—Derek-Lynn	July
244 711 Ocean Drive—O'Brien-Dru	July
247 Beyond the Purple Hills—Gene Autry (70 m.)	July
240 Captive Girl—Johnny Weissmuller	July
220 David Harding, Counterspy—St. John-Long	July 13
215 On the Isle of Samoa—Jon Hall	Aug.
242 In a Lonely Place—Bogart-Grahame	Aug.
264 Streets of Ghost Town—Starrett (54 m.)	Aug. 3
207 Beware of Blondie—Lake-Singleton	Aug. 10
249 Indian Territory—Gene Autry (70 m.)	Sept.
262 Across the Badlands—Starrett	Sept. 14
239 The Fuller Brush Girl—Ball-Albert	Oct.

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

324 Convicted—Ford-Crawford	Aug.
317 The Petty Girl—Cummings-Caulfield	Sept.
304 When You're Smiling—Courtland-Albright	Sept. 21
Last of the Bucaneers—Henreid-Ooakie	Oct.
311 Rookie Fireman—Williams-Reynolds	Oct. 12
Raiders of Tomahawk Creek—Starrett	Oct. 26
328 Between Midnight and Dawn—Stevens-O'Brien	
Storm (formerly "Prowl Car")	Oct.

Eagle-Lion Classics Features

(165 West 46th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

066 Timber Fury—Bruce-Lee	June
030 It's a Small World—Dale-Miller	June
016 The Blue Lamp—British cast	June
055 Up in Mabel's Room—reissue	July
054 Tillie's Punctured Romance—reissue	July
058 Abroad with Two Yanks—reissue	July
050 Death of a Dream—Documentary	July
084 Federal Man—Henry-Blake	July
026 Destination Moon—Archer-Anderson	Aug.
025 The Torch—Goddard-Armendariz	Aug.
045 Eye Witness—Montgomery-Banks	Sept.
044 High Lonesome—Barrymore-Wills	Sept.
Naughty Arlette—British cast	Sept.
071 I Killed Geronimo—Ellison-Herrick	Sept.
Paper Gallows—British cast	Sept.
The Taming of Dorothy—British cast	Sept.
One Minute to Twelve—Swedish cast	Oct.
So Long at the Fair—British cast	Oct.
The Second Face—Raines-Bennett-Bruce	Oct.
The Kangaroo Kid—Borg-Malone	Oct.
Two Lost Worlds—Laura Elliott	Oct.
Prehistoric Women—Luez-Nixon	Nov.
They Were Not Divided—British cast	Nov.
Rogue River—Calhoun-Madison	Nov.
Mr. Universe—Carson-Paige-Lahr	Nov.
046 The Sun Sets at Dawn—Reed-Parr	Nov.
Golden Salamander—British cast	Dec.
The Kid from Mexico—Rooney-Hendrix	Dec.
Tinderbox—Cartoon feature	Dec.
White Heather—Milland-Roc	Dec.

Lippert-Screen Guild Features

(255 Hyde St., San Francisco 2, Calif.)

4930 West of the Brazos—Ellison-Hayden	Apr. 28
4910 Operation Haylift—Williams-Rutherford	May 5
4925 Colorado Ranger—Ellison-Hayden	May 12
4904 Rocketship XM—Bridges-O'Brian	June 2
4926 Crooked River—Ellison-Hayden	June 9
4923 Motor Patrol—Castle-O'Brian	June 16
4929 Fast on the Draw—Ellison-Hayden	June 30
4920 Hijacked—Davis-Jones	July 14
4932 Gunfire—Barry-Lowery	Aug. 11
4931 I Shot Billy the Kid—Barry-Neal	Aug. 25
4907 Return of Jesse James—Ireland-Dvorak	Sept. 8
4934 Train to Tombstone—Barry-Neal	Sept. 15
4933 Border Rangers—Barry-Neal (57 m.)	Oct. 6
4911 Holiday Rhythm—All-star cast	Oct. 13

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

1949-50

25 The Reformer & the Redhead—Powell-Allyson	May
26 Please Believe Me—Kerr-Walker-Lawford	May
27 Shadow on the Wall—Sothorn-Scott	May
28 The Big Hangover—Johnson-Taylor	May
30 Father of the Bride—Tracy-Bennett-Taylor	June
31 Skipper Surprised His Wife—Walker-Leslie	June
29 The Asphalt Jungle—Hayden-Hagen	June
32 The Happy Years—Stockwell-Hickman	July
33 Duchess of Idaho—Williams-Johnson	July
41 Crisis—Grant-Ferrer	July
35 Mystery Street—Montalban-Forrest	July
36 Three Little Words—Astaire-Skelton-Ellen	Aug.
37 Lady Without Passport—Lamar-Hodiak	Aug.
38 Summer Stock—Garland-Kelly	Aug.
39 Annie Get Your Gun—Hutton-Keel	not set

(Continued on next page)

40 Stars in My Crown—McCrea-Drewnot set
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

103 Toast of New Orleans—Grayson-Lanza-Niven..Sept.
102 Devil's Doorway—Robert TaylorSept.
101 A Life of Her Own—Turner-MillandSept.
106 The Miniver Story—Garson-PidgeonOct.
104 Right Cross—Powell-Allyson-MontalbanOct.
105 To Please a Lady—Gable-StanwyckOct.
Dial 1119—Thompson-BrasselleNov.
Two Weeks with Love—Powell-MontalbanNov.
King Solomon's Mines—Kerr-GrangerNov.
Cause for Alarm—Young-SullivanDec.
Pagan Love Song—Williams-Keel-Montalban ...Dec.
Watch the Birdie—Red Skelton
(formerly "The Camera Man")Dec.
The Next Voice You Hear—Whitmore-Davis..not set
Kim—Flynn-Stockwellnot set

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

1949-50

4905 Bomba and the Lost Volcano—SheffieldJune 25
4942 Arizona Territory—Whip Wilson (56 m.)...July 2
4923 The Silk Moose—Carole Landis (formerly
"The Silk Stocking Murder")July 9
4919 Snow Dog—Kirby GrantJuly 16
4903 County Fair—Calhoun-NighAug. 6
4915 Triple Trouble—Bowery BoysAug. 13
4943 Silver Raiders—Whip Wilson (55 m.)Aug. 20
4908 Big Timber—McDowall-DonnellSept. 10
4953 Law of the Panhandle—J. M. Brown.....Sept. 17
4906 Bomba and the Hidden City—Sheffield....Sept. 24
4944 Cherokee Uprising—Whip WilsonOct. 8
4918 Hot Rod—Lydon-WintersOct. 22
4916 Blues Buster—Bowery Boys
(formerly "Bowery Thrush")Oct. 29
4954 Massacre Valley—J. M. BrownNov. 26
4945 Outlaws of Texas—Whip WilsonDec. 10
(more to come)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

5199 A Modern Marriage—Hadley-FieldOct. 15
5117 The Squared Circle—Joe KirkwoodNov. 5
5125 Father's Wild Game—WalburnNov. 19

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

1949-50

4916 Eagle & the Hawk—Payne-Fleming-O'Keefe ...June
4922 My Friend Irma Goes West—Wilson-LynnJuly
4923 The Lawless—Carey-RussellJuly
4926 The Furies—Stanwyck-HustonAug.
4927 Sunset Boulevard—Swanson-HoldenAug.
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

5001 Fancy Pants—Hope-BallSept.
5002 Union Station—Holden-OlsenSept.
5003 Copper Canyon—Lamarr-MillandOct.
5004 Dark City—Heston-ScottOct.
Going My Way—reissueOct.
5008 Cassino to Korea—DocumentaryOct.
5006 Let's Dance—Hutton-AstaireNov.
5005 Tripoli—Payne-O'HaraNov.
5007 Mr. Music—Crosby-Coburn-HusseyDec.

RKO Features

1948-49

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)

(No national release dates)

018 The Tattooed Stranger—Miles-White
020 Tarzan and the Slave Girl—Barker-Darcel
073 The Capture—Wright-Ayres
074 Wagonmaster—Johnson-Drew
022 Dynamite Pass—Tim Holt (61 m.)
021 The Golden Twenties—Documentary
075 The Secret Fury—Colbert-Ryan
023 The White Tower—Ford-Valli
024 Where Danger Lives—Mitchum-Domergue
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

191 Treasure Island—Driscoll-Newton
151 Our Very Own—Blythe-Granger-Evans
101 Born To Be Bad—Fontaine-Ryan
104 Bunco Squad—Sterling-Dixon
152 Edge of Doom—Granger-Andrews-Evans
103 Outrage—Andrews-Powers
102 Walk Softly, Stranger—Valli-Cotten
105 Border Treasure—Tim Holt (59 m.)

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

1949-50

4920 The Avengers—Carroll-MaraJune 26
4945 Trigger, Jr.—Roy Rogers (68 m.)June 30
4965 Covered Wagon Raid—Lane (60 m.)June 30
4921 Trial Without Jury—Rockwell-TaylorJuly 8
4973 The Old Frontier—Monty Hale (60 m.)July 29
4922 Jungle Stampede—DocumentaryJuly 29
4966 Vigilante Hideout—Allan Lane (60 m.)...Aug. 6
4924 The Showdown—Elliott-Brennan-Windsor ..Aug. 15
4925 Lonely Heart Bandits—Patrick-Rockwell...Aug. 29
4967 Frisco Tornado—Allan Lane (60 m.)Sept. 6
4953 Redwood Forest Trail—Rex Allen (60 m.)...Sept. 18
4929 Prisoners in Petticoats—Perkins-Rockwell...Sept. 18
4943 Sunset in the West—Roy Rogers (67 m.)...Sept. 25
(more to come)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

5001 Surrender—Ralston-CarrollSept. 15
5002 Hit Parade of 1951—Carroll-Macdonald ...Oct. 15
Rustlers on Horseback—Allan LaneOct. 23

Selznick Rel. Org. Features

(400 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.)

The Fallen Idol—British castNov.
The Third Man—Welles-Valli-CottenFeb.

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

013 Night and the City—Tierney-WidmarkJune
016 Love That Brute—Douglas-PetersJune
015 The Gunfighter—Gregory PeckJuly
017 Where the Sidewalk Ends—Andrews-Tierney ...July
018 Stella—Sheridan-Mature-WayneAug.
020 The Caribou Trail—Randolph ScottAug.
014 Broken Arrow—Stewart-PagetAug.
019 The Black Rose—Power-Aubrey-WellesSept.
021 My Blue Heaven—Grable-DaileySept.
022 Panic in the Streets—Widmark-DouglasSept.
028 Farewell to Yesterday—DocumentarySept.
023 The Fireball—Rooney-O'BrienOct.
024 Mister 880—Lancaster-Gwenn-McGuireOct.
025 No Way Out—Widmark-DarnellOct.
027 I'll Get By—Haver-Lundigan-De HavenOct.
029 Two Flags West—Darnell-Wilde-CottenNov.
030 All About Eve—Davis-BaxterNov.
031 The Jackpot—Stewart-MedinaNov.
American Guerrilla in the Philippines—
Power-PrelleDec.
For Heaven's Sake—Bennett-Webb-Blondell....Dec.

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

The Whipped—Duryea-Storm-O'SheaJune 2
Iroquois Trail—Montgomery-MarshallJune 16
Once a Thief—Romero-Havoc-McDonaldJuly 7
The Underworld Story—Duryea-Storm (reviewed
as "The Whipped")July 21
The Admiral Was a Lady—Hendrix-O'BrienAug. 4
The Men—Brando-WrightAug. 25
If This Be Sin—Loy-Cummins-GreeneSept. 8
Ellen—Young-Drake-SuttonOct. 13
Three Husbands—Williams-Arden-WarrickNov. 17
New Mexico—Ayres-Maxwell-CoreyDec. 1
The Sound of Fury—Ryan-LovejoyJan. 15

Universal-International Features

(445 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

1949-50

918 Curtain Call at Cactus Creek—O'Connor-Arden..June
919 Sierra—Murphy-HendrixJune
920 Spy Ring—Toren-DuffJune
921 Winchester '73—Stewart-Winters-DuryeaJuly
922 Peggy—Lynn-Coburn-GreenwoodJuly
923 Adam and Evelyn—British castJuly
924 Abbott & Costello in the Foreign LegionAug.
925 The Desert Hawk—De Carlo-GreeneAug.
926 Louisa—Coburn-Gwenn-ByingtonAug.
927 Madness of the Heart—English castAug.
928 Saddle Tramp—McCrea-HendrixSept.
929 Shakedown—Duff-Donlevy-DowSept.
930 The Sleeping City—Conte-Gray-DowSept.
931 Wyoming Mail—McNally-SmithOct.
932 Woman on the Run—Sheridan-O'KeefeOct.
905 Tight Little Island—British castnot set
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

101 Hamlet—Laurence Olivier	Nov.
102 The Milkman—O'Connor-Durante	Nov.
103 Departed—Toren-Chandler	Nov.

Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

1949-50

923 Destination Tokyo—reissue	June 3
924 God Is My Co-Pilot—reissue	June 3
925 Caged—Parker-Moorehead	June 10
926 This Side of the Law—Lindfors-Smith	June 17
927 Return of the Frontiersman—McRae-London	June 24
928 Bright Leaf—Cooper-Bacall-Carson	July 1
929 The Great Jewel Robbery—David Brian	July 15
930 The Flame and the Arrow—Lancaster-Mayo	July 22
931 50 Years Before Your Eyes—Documentary	July 29
932 Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye—Cagney	Aug. 19

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

001 Tea for Two—Day-McRae	Sept. 2
002 Alcatraz Island—reissue	Sept. 9
003 San Quentin—reissue	Sept. 9
004 Pretty Baby—Morgan-Drake-Scott	Sept. 16
005 Breaking Point—Garfield-Neal	Sept. 30
006 Three Secrets—Parker-Neal-Roman	Oct. 14
007 The Glass Menagerie—Wyman-Douglas	Oct. 28
008 Rocky Mountain—Flynn-Wymore	Nov. 11

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**1949-50****Columbia—One Reel**

2611 The Timid Pup—Favorite (reissue) (7 m.)	July 6
2810 King of the Jockeys—Sports (9 m.)	July 20
2860 Hollywood's Famous Feet— Screen Snap (8½ m.)	July 20
2654 Leon & Eddie's—Cavalcade of B'way	July 27
2505 Giddyap—Jolly Frolics (6½ m.)	July 27
2612 The Gorilla Hunt—Novelty (8 m.)	Aug. 3
2556 Candid Microphone No. 6 (10½ m.)	Aug. 17

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

3601 Happy Tots Expedition—Favorite (reissue) (7 m.)	Sept. 7
3701 Trouble Indemnity—Mr. Magoo (6½ m.)	Sept. 14
3951 Korn Kobblers—Favorite (reissue) (11 m.)	Sept. 21
3801 Snow Fiesta—Sports	Sept. 28
3851 30th Anniversary Special— Screen Snap. (11 m.)	Sept. 28
3901 Stars of Tomorrow—Novelty	Sept. 28
3602 Land of Fun—Favorite (reissue) (16 m.)	Oct. 5
3551 Candid Microphone No. 1	Oct. 12
3852 Fun at Shadow Mountain— Screen Snap. (9½ m.)	Oct. 19

Columbia—Two Reels**1949-50**

2408 Self-Made Maids—Stooges (16 m.)	July 6
2426 One Shivery Sight—Hugh Herbert (16½ m.)	July 13
2416 House About It—Quillan-Vernon (16½ m.)	July 20
2180 Atom Man vs. Superman—Serial (15 ep.)	July 20
2436 Oh My Nerves!—Favorite (reissue) (17 m.)	July 27

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

3401 Three Hams on Rye—Stooges (15½ m.)	Sept. 7
3411 A Blunderful Time— Andy Clyde (16½ m.)	Sept. 7
3431 Shot in the Escape— Favorite (reissue) (19 m.)	Sept. 14
3402 Studio Stoops—Stooges (16 m.)	Oct. 5
3412 Foy Meets Girl—Eddie Foy	Oct. 5
3421 Two Roaming Champs—Baer-Rosenblum	Oct. 12

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel**1949-50**

W-145 Safety Second—Cartoon (7 m.)	July 1
S-160 A Wife's Life—Pete Smith (8 m.)	July 8
Z-172 Moments in Music—Industry Short (10 m.)	July 13
T-119 To the Coast of Devon—Traveltalk (9 m.)	July 15
T-120 Touring Northern England—Travel. (9 m.)	July 29
T-121 Land of Auld Lang Syne—Travel. (8 m.)	Aug. 12
T-122 Life on the Thames—Traveltalk (9 m.)	Aug. 26
W-146 Albert in Blunderland—Cartoon (8 m.)	Aug. 26

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

S-251 Wrong Way Butch—Pete Smith (10 m.)	Sept. 2
S-252 Football Thrills No. 13— Pete Smith (9 m.)	Sept. 9

W-231 The Hollywood Bowl—Cartoon (7 m.)	Sept. 16
W-232 Garden Gopher—Cartoon (6 m.)	Sept. 30
W-261 Zoot Cat—Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)	Oct. 7
W-233 The Framed Cat—Cartoon (7 m.)	Oct. 21

Paramount—One Reel**1949-50**

E9-6 Jitterbug Jive—Popeye (7 m.)	June 23
X9-9 Heap, Hep Injuns—Screen Song (7 m.)	June 30
R9-8 To the Winner—Sportlight (10 m.)	July 7
P9-8 Pleased to Eat You—Noveltoon (7 m.)	July 21
X9-10 Gobs of Fun—Screen Song (7 m.)	July 28
R9-9 The Sporting Suwannee—Sportlight (10 m.)	Aug. 4
E9-7 Popeye Makes a Movie—Popeye (10 m.)	Aug. 11
P9-9 Goofy, Goofy, Gander—Noveltoon (7 m.)	Aug. 18
X9-11 Helter-Swelter—Screen Song (7 m.)	Aug. 25
R9-10 Operation Jack Frost—Sportlight (10 m.)	Sept. 1
K9-6 Cowboy Crazy—Pacemaker (10 m.)	Sept. 8
P9-10 Saved by the Bell—Noveltoon (7 m.)	Sept. 15
X9-12 Boos in the Night—Screen Song (6 m.)	Sept. 22
E9-8 Baby Wants Spinach—Popeye (7 m.)	Sept. 29

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

R10-1 Desert High Jinks—Sportlight	Oct. 6
Z10-1 Her Honor, The Mare—Champion	Oct. 13
E10-1 Quick on the Vigor—Popeye	Oct. 13
K10-1 Just for Fun—Pacemaker	Oct. 20
B10-1 Casper's Spree Under the Sea—Casper	Oct. 27
P10-1 Voice of the Turkey—Noveltoon	Nov. 3
Z10-2 We're On Our Way to Rio—Champion	Nov. 3
R10-2 Outboard Shenanigans—Sportlight	Nov. 10
E10-2 Riot in Rhythm—Popeye	Nov. 17
Z10-3 Popeye a la Mode—Champion	Nov. 17
P10-2 Mice Meeting You—Noveltoon	Nov. 24
Z10-4 Shape Ahoy—Champion	Dec. 1
X10-1 Fiesta Time—Screen Song	Dec. 8
R10-3 Glacier Fishing—Sportlight	Dec. 15
K10-2 The City of Beautiful Girls—Pacemaker	Dec. 22
B10-2 Once Upon a Rhyme—Casper	Dec. 29

Paramount—Two Reels**Beginning of 1950-51 Season**

T10-1 The New Pioneers—Special (20 m.)	Sept. 1
FF10-1 Mardi Gras—Musical Parade (19 m.)	Oct. 6
FF10-2 Caribbean Romance—Musical Parade (19 min.)	Oct. 6
FF10-3 Showboat Serenade—Musical Parade (20 min.)	Oct. 6
FF10-4 You Hit the Spot—Musical Parade	Oct. 6
FF10-5 Bombalera—Musical Parade	Oct. 6
FF10-6 Halfway to Heaven—Musical Parade	Oct. 6

RKO—One Reel**1949-50**

04116 Motor Mania—Disney (7 m.)	June 30
04311 Ben Hogan—Sportscope (reissue) (9 m.)	June 30
04705 The Grasshopper & the Ant— Disney (reissue) (7 m.)	July 7
04212 Nickelodeon Time—Screenliner (9 m.)	July 14
04117 Pests of the West—Disney (7 m.)	July 21
04312 Lady of the Deep—Sportscope (8 m.)	July 28
04118 Food for Feudin—Disney (7 m.)	Aug. 11
04213 Day in Manhattan—Screenliner (8 m.)	Aug. 11
04706 Brave Little Tailor— Disney (reissue) (9 m.)	Aug. 25
04313 Nova Scotia Woodcock— Sportscope (8 m.)	Aug. 25

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

14101 Hook, Lion & Sinker—Disney (7 m.)	Sept. 1
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RKO—Two Reels**1949-50**

03406 Photo Phonies—Comedy Special (16 m.)	July 7
03111 House of Mercy—This Is America (15 m.)	July 21

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

13101 Pinkerton Man—This Is America (16 m.)	Sept. 15
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Republic—One Reel

9495 Battle for Korea—Special (9 m.)	July 1
4877 Glacier National Park— This World of Ours (9 m.)	July 15
4978 Sweden—This World of Ours (9 m.)	Aug. 30

Republic—Two Reels

4983 Undersea Kingdom— Serial (12 ep.) (reissue)	July 8
4984 The Invisible Monster—Serial (12 ep.)	Sept. 30

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 5010 The Red Headed Monkey—Terrytoon (7 m.)...July
 8002 New York Philharmonic Orch.—Specialty
 (10 m.)July
 5011 Dingbat in All This & Rabbit Stew—Terry.
 (7 m.)July
 8003 Music of Manhattan—Specialty (10 m.)July
 5012 The Dog Show—Terrytoon (7 m.)Aug.
 7003 Skitch Henderson & Orch.—Melody (10 m.)...Aug.
 5013 King Tut's Tomb (Talk. Magpies)—Terry.
 (7 m.)Aug.
 3007 Bowlers' Fair—Sports (8 m.)Aug.
 5014 Little Roquefort in Cat Happy—
 Terrytoon (7 m.)Sept.
 3008 Football Pay-off Plays—SportsSept.
 5015 If Cats Could Sing—Terrytoon (7 m.)Sept.
 5016 Little Roquefort in Mouse & Garden—
 Terrytoon (7 m.)Oct.
 3009 Circus on the Campus—SportsOct.
 5017 Beauty on the Beach (Mighty Mouse)—
 Terrytoon (7 m.)Oct.
 7004 The Fontaine Sisters—Melody (8 m.).....Oct.
 5018 Wide Open Spaces (Gandy Goose)—
 Terrytoon (7 m.)Nov.
 3010 Tee Girls—SportsNov.
 5019 Sour Grapes (Dingbat)—Terrytoon (7 m.)...Dec.
 5020 Mother Goose's Birthday Party (Mighty Mouse)—
 Terrytoon (7 m.)Dec.

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- Vol. 16 No. 4—Beauty at Work—
 March of Time (17 m.).....June
 Vol. 16 No. 5—As Russia Sees It—
 March of Time (16 m.).....Aug.

United Artists—One Reel

- Folk Lore—Songs of America (9 m.)Aug. 11
 The Moods—Songs of America (9 m.)Sept. 15

Universal—One Reel**1949-50**

- 5386 Melody Moods—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)...July 17
 5331 Toyland Premiere—
 Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)Aug. 14
 5387 Sing Happy—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)...Aug. 28
 5332 Greatest Man in Siam—
 Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)Sept. 11
 5346 Treasure of the Nile—Variety Views (9 m.)...Sept. 25
 5388 Feast of Songs—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)...Oct. 2
 5333 Ski for Two—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)...Oct. 16
 5347 Brooklyn Goes Hollywood—Variety Views
 (9 m.)Oct. 16
 5348 In the Shadow of the Andes—
 Variety Views (9 m.)Oct. 23
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Universal—Two Reels**1949-50**

- 5356 Cactus Caravan—Musical Western (26 m.)...July 6
 5309 Sarah Vaughan & Herb Jeffries—
 Musical (15 m.)July 12
 5310 Red Nichols & His Five Pennies—Musical
 (15 m.)Aug. 9
 5311 Salute to Duke Ellington—Musical (15 m.)...Aug. 30
 5357 Western Courage—Musical Western
 (26 m.)Aug. 31
 5312 Connie Boswell & Les Brown Orch.—
 Musical (15 m.)Sept. 2
 5358 Ready to Ride—Musical Western (25 m.)...Oct. 5
 5313 Music By Martin—Musical (15 m.)Oct. 11
 5202 The Tiny Terrors Make Trouble—Special...Jan. 18
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Vitaphone—One Reel**1949-50**

- 6311 Booby Hatched—B. R. Cartoon (reissue)
 (7 m.)July 1
 6405 So You Want to Hold Your Husband—
 Joe McDoakes (10 m.)July 1
 6509 Racing Thrills—Sports Parade (10 m.)July 8
 6723 8-Ball Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)July 8
 6713 It's Hummer Time—Merrie Melody (7 m.)...July 22
 6808 Cliff Edwards & His Buckeroos—Melody Master
 (reissue) (10 m.)July 22
 6312 Trap Happy Porky—B.R. Cartoon
 (reissue) (7 m.)Aug. 5
 6714 Golden Yeggs—Merrie Melody (7 m.)Aug. 5
 6606 Cavalcade of Girls—Novelty (10 m.)Aug. 12
 6724 Hillbilly Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)Aug. 12
 6406 So You Want to Move—
 Joe McDoakes (10 m.)Aug. 19

Champions of Tomorrow—

- Sports Parade (10 m.)Aug. 19
 6313 Lost & Foundling—B.R. Cartoon
 (reissue) (7 m.)Aug. 26
 6715 Dog Gone South—Merrie Melody (7 m.)...Aug. 26
 6716 The Dicksters—Looney Tune (7 m.)Sept. 2
 6717 A Fractured Leghorn—Looney Tune (7 m.)...Sept. 16
 6725 Bunker Hill Bunny—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)...Sept. 23
 6718 Canary Row—Looney Tune (7 m.)Oct. 7
 6726 Bushy Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.)Nov. 11
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 7502 Grandad of Races—Sports Parade (10 m.)...Sept. 2
 7301 Fagan's Freshmen—B. R. Cartoon (reissue)
 (7 m.)Sept. 16
 7401 So You Want a Raise—Joe McDoakes
 (10 m.)Sept. 23
 7801 When Grandpa Was a Boy—Hit ParadeOct. 7
 7302 Slightly Daffy—Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)...Oct. 14
 7601 Slap Happy—Novelty (10 m.)Oct. 14
 7701 Stooze for a Mouse—Merrie Melody (7 m.)...Oct. 21
 7503 Paddle Your Own Canoe—
 Sports Parade (10 m.)Oct. 21
 7702 Pop 'Im Pop!—Merrie Melody (7 m.)Oct. 28
 7303 The Aristo Cat—Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)...Nov. 11
 7602 Those Who Dance—Novelty (10 m.)Nov. 25
 7703 Caveman Inki—Merrie Melody (7 m.)Nov. 25

Vitaphone—Two Reels**1949-50**

- 6106 Just for Fun—Featurette (20 m.)July 15
 6008 Sweden with Charlie McCarthy & Mortimer
 Snerd—Special (20 m.)Sept. 3
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 7001 Wish You Were Here—Special (20 m.)July 29
 7101 Wagon Wheels West—Featurette (reissue)
 (20 m.)Sept. 9
 7002 Royal Rodeo—Special (20 m.)Nov. 4
 7102 Life Begins Tomorrow—Featurette
 (reissue) (20 m.)Nov. 18

NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK**RELEASE DATES****Paramount News**

- 14 Sat. (E)Oct. 7
 15 Wed. (O)Oct. 11
 16 Sat. (E)Oct. 14
 17 Wed. (O)Oct. 18
 18 Sat. (E)Oct. 21
 19 Wed. (O)Oct. 25
 20 Sat. (E)Oct. 28
 21 Wed. (O)Nov. 1
 22 Sat. (E)Nov. 4
 23 Wed. (O)Nov. 8
 24 Sat. (E)Nov. 11
 25 Wed. (O)Nov. 15
 26 Sat. (E)Nov. 18

Warner Pathe News

- 15 Wed. (O)Oct. 4
 16 Mon. (E)Oct. 9
 17 Wed. (O)Oct. 11
 18 Mon. (E)Oct. 16
 19 Wed. (O)Oct. 18
 20 Mon. (E)Oct. 23
 21 Wed. (O)Oct. 25
 22 Mon. (E)Oct. 30
 23 Wed. (O)Nov. 1
 24 Mon. (E)Nov. 6
 25 Wed. (O)Nov. 8
 26 Mon. (E)Nov. 13
 27 Wed. (O)Nov. 15

Fox Movietone

- 81 Friday (O)Oct. 6
 82 Tues. (E)Oct. 10
 83 Friday (O)Oct. 13
 84 Tues. (E)Oct. 17
 85 Friday (O)Oct. 20
 86 Tues. (E)Oct. 24
 87 Friday (O)Oct. 27
 88 Tues. (E)Oct. 31
 89 Friday (O)Nov. 13
 90 Tues. (E)Nov. 7
 91 Friday (O)Nov. 10
 92 Tues. (E)Nov. 14
 93 Friday (O)Nov. 17

News of the Day

- 210 Wed. (E) ...Oct. 4
 211 Mon. (O) ...Oct. 9
 212 Wed. (E) ...Oct. 11
 213 Mon. (O) ...Oct. 16
 214 Wed. (E) ...Oct. 18
 215 Mon. (O) ...Oct. 23
 216 Wed. (E) ...Oct. 25
 217 Mon. (O) ...Oct. 30
 218 Wed. (E) ...Nov. 1
 219 Mon. (O) ...Nov. 6
 220 Wed. (E) ...Nov. 8
 221 Mon. (O) ...Nov. 13
 222 Wed. (E) ...Nov. 15

Universal News

- 392 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 5
 393 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 10
 394 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 12
 395 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 17
 396 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 19
 397 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 24
 398 Thurs. (E) ...Oct. 26
 399 Tues. (O) ...Oct. 31
 400 Thurs. (E) ..Nov. 2
 401 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 7
 402 Thurs. (E) ..Nov. 9
 403 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 14
 404 Thurs. (E) ..Nov. 16

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Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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Vol. XXXII

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1950

No. 41

HERE AND THERE

ON HIS NATIONWIDE RADIO program Tuesday night over the NBC network, Bob Hope devoted his closing remarks to a warm tribute to the motion picture industry, its theatres and its product. He said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, when you picked up your morning newspaper the other day maybe you saw that shot of a G.I. in Korea, setting up a motion picture projector somewhere along 'Heartbreak Road.' I couldn't help thinking, 'What a Road picture.' And I can't help thinking that life would be a pretty dull routine without the magic of Hollywood's magic lanterns.

"Imagine Main Street without its marquee. Imagine Saturday afternoon without its marquee. Sort o'like Texas without stars, isn't it? A lot of us take the movies for granted, and we're so right . . . they're like the automobile, they're part of our everyday life. And like the new cars, pictures are better than ever. (I'll even say that about Crosby's pictures . . . if he'll say that much about mine!)

"I'm mighty proud to be part of a great industry that gives so many so much pleasure for so little. Yes sir, a dollar doesn't buy much of a steak any more but that buck at the box office is still a great bargain: America's best music and drama, plus a million laughs and thrills, plus two bags of popcorn! You can't beat it!"

The industry owes a vote of thanks to Bob Hope for this very fine tribute. Those of us who have been quick to castigate the stars who ridicule and deride the movies for a laugh should be just as quick with our expression of thanks when they do us a great service. Drop Bob Hope a line in care of the Paramount Studios, Marathon Avenue, Hollywood, California, and let him know how much you appreciate his remarks.

* * *

GAEL SULLIVAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of TOA, this week made public a letter received from Charles J. Valaer, Deputy Commissioner of Internal Revenue, clarifying a previous ruling regarding the Federal admission tax on tickets to drive-in theatres.

In the previous ruling handed down in September, 1949, in response to an inquiry by Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Valaer said that if a drive-in theatre does not have in effect on a certain night or nights an established price for a single admission, and it charges \$1.00, including tax, for each car admitted on such occasion,

regardless of the number of persons in the car, the established price of admission to the theatre is 83 cents and the total federal admission tax due thereon is 17 cents. The theatre may change its policy at any time and admit patrons only on the basis of a per person charge.

"It may not, however, admit cars with one person for one price such as 40 cents, including tax, and for the same performance admit a group of persons in a car for \$1.00, including tax," added Mr. Valaer.

To clarify any ambiguity that might arise from the language contained in the statement quoted above, Mr. Valaer had this to say in his recent letter to Mr. Sullivan:

"Where a drive-in theatre makes a set charge such as \$1.00, including tax, for the admission of automobiles, without regard to the number of persons therein, the established price of admission for automobiles is 83 cents and the tax due thereon is 17 cents. In such case an automobile with only one or two persons may be admitted at a reduced rate, but the tax is computed on the basis of the established price for the admission of automobiles. For example, if an automobile with two passengers is admitted for 70 cents, including tax, the tax applicable in each case is 17 cents based on the established price for the admission of automobiles."

* * *

IN LETTERS SENT THIS WEEK to heads of the leading exhibitor organizations as well as to one thousand individual theatre operators in key points, the Council of Motion Picture Organizations appealed to the exhibitors for clippings of newspaper comment on motion picture activities.

COMPO is requesting prompt transmission of editorial or columnists' comments, whether adverse or favorable to the industry.

Arthur L. Mayer, COMPO's executive vice-president, said in his letter that COMPO, by obtaining this information, can move directly to answer criticism or can supply local industry representatives with data for rebuttal. He said also that digests of the comments will be made so that it will be possible to evaluate editorial attitudes toward the industry.

The compilation of such clippings is most important to the industry's public relations program. They should be mailed to the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, 1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.

"September Affair" with Joan Fontaine and Joseph Cotten

(Paramount, no rel. date set; time, 104 min.)

Produced by Hal Wallis in Italy, "September Affair" offers a familiar tale about the sincere but hopeless love affair between an unhappily married man and an unmarried woman, but even though the story is lacking in depth it has been made into a fairly compelling adult drama by reason of the fine direction and sensitive acting. Women in particular should find it to their liking, for it is replete with all the elements that the ladies relish. The action fans, however, probably will find the long drawn out proceedings tenuous. Most of the footage was shot in and around Capri, Naples, Rome, Florence and Pompeii, giving the film picturesque settings that are highly interesting. The excellent music score deserves special mention:—

On a plane bound from Rome to New York, Joseph Cotten, a prosperous American engineer, meets Joan Fontaine, a pianist, returning to New York for her concert debut. They land at Naples when the plane develops engine trouble, and decide to see the sights while the repairs are being made. They become so engrossed in each other that they miss the plane; they decide to spend several days—as friends—visiting Pompeii and Capri. Meanwhile Cotten had revealed to her that he is unhappily married to Jessica Tandy, and that he had a grown son (Robert Arthur). They fall madly in love during their unconventional holiday, and later learn that the plane they had missed had been wrecked, killing all the passengers, and that they had been listed among those missing. They decide to let the world believe that they are dead, and Cotten, with the aid of Francoise Rosay, Joan's music tutor in Florence, obtains enough money from his estate to buy a Florentine villa. Their life together is idyllic until Jessica and her son, touring Italy, visit Miss Rosay's home and meet Joan. They recognize her from photographs in the newspapers and quickly conclude that Cotten was alive and living with her. Both Cotten and Joan are relieved when Jessica makes no issue over their romance, but in due time Joan sees in Cotten a yearning for his son and an eagerness to return to his work. They go to New York, he on business, and she for her concert debut, which proves highly successful. There, Joan comes to the realization that Cotten's obligations to his wife and son were more important than their love. She parts from him and goes to South America to continue her music career.

It was directed by William Dieterle, from a screen play by Robert Thoeren, based on a story by Fritz Rotter. Strictly adult fare.

"Tripoli" with Maureen O'Hara, John Payne and Philip Reed

(Paramount, November; time, 95 min.)

The Technicolor photography and the drawing power of the players are the important factors in this otherwise routine adventure melodrama. Set in 1805, at the time when the United States was at war with Tripoli, the story is supposedly based on a true historical incident involving the march of a native army, led by a detachment of U. S. Marines, across the Libyan desert to attack the beleaguered city from the rear. The trouble with the picture is that it lacks a substantial story and is too long drawn out. Although it does have a burst of excitement here and there, notably at the finish, its opportunities for action are never fully developed because it dawdles too long on the cliché-ridden romantic by-play between John Payne, as the Marine lieutenant in charge of the expedition, and Maureen O'Hara, as an exotic beauty attached to the court of an exiled Tripolitanian Pasha. There is some comedy, but it is trite and woefully weak. All in all, it shapes up as passable entertainment for those who are not too critical:—

As part of a plan to capture Tripoli by a coordinated land and sea operation, Payne is selected to lead the land attack and to build a native army around Philip Reed, the exiled Pasha dethroned by his brother. Arriving at Reed's desert hideaway, Payne quickly wins his cooperation and organizes an army of 600 natives, including a group of Greek professional soldiers, headed by Howard da Silva. He meets at the hideaway Maureen, who was the daughter of an exiled French diplomat, and upon whom Reed showered attentions, planning to make her his wife. Although mutually attracted, a feeling of animosity grows up between Maureen and Payne, and when she manages to come along on the trek to Tripoli they find themselves constantly at odds. Battling its way through a sand storm, the army eventually reaches the outskirts of Tripoli and Payne prepares to coordinate his attack with that of American warships offshore. Meanwhile Reed had secretly joined a conspiracy to defeat the Americans, and he tells Maureen of the scheme. Now in love with Payne

and realizing the danger to his life, Maureen steals Reed's horse and rides to warn Payne. Her warning enables him to concoct a counter-scheme that defeats the enemy.

It was produced by William H. Pine and William C. Thomas, and directed by Will Price, from a screen play by Winston Miller, who based it on a story by himself and the director. Suitable for the family.

"Surrender" with Vera Ralston, John Carroll and Walter Brennan

(Republic, Sept. 15; time, 90 min.)

There is nothing new, novel or distinctive in "Surrender," a routine melodrama that is set in the early days of Texas and that deals with the machinations of an avaricious siren. Undiscriminating audiences will find it mildly entertaining at best, while others no doubt will be bored. None of the players manage to rise above the weak script. The acting, in fact, is "hammy," particularly so in the case of Vera Ralston, as the scheming beauty of the piece; her mugging and exaggerated posturing are reminiscent of the acting in the pre-talkie days. Except for a typical Western horseback chase and gun duel in the closing scenes, the pace is slow. The production values are good:—

Having left her husband (Francis Lederer) in a Houston jail, and having fled from the San Antonio police herself, Vera settles down in a small border town with Maria Palmer, her sister, an industrious girl who owned a women's shop. Vera, determined to have wealth regardless of cost, charms Edward Norris, blackjack dealer, into stealing money from John Carroll, his boss, to buy her a bracelet. When Carroll, a shady character himself, comes to her home to retrieve the bracelet, Vera makes a play for him. William Ching, Carroll's newspaperman pal, is attracted to Maria, who falls in love with him. But when Vera learns that Ching's family is the richest in Texas, she abandons Carroll and lures Ching into eloping with her. She flaunts her success and taunts Janet, and even attempts to carry on a secret love affair with Carroll, but the gambler, who had a high regard for Ching, refuses to have anything to do with her. Vera's past catches up with her when Lederer, released from prison, shows up in town and tries to blackmail her to keep secret the fact that she had married Ching without bothering to divorce him (Lederer). Vera lures Lederer to Carroll's office and kills him. Ching, finding the body, is arrested for the murder by Walter Brennan, the sheriff, but does not deny the killing out of a belief that it had been committed by Carroll to protect his (Ching's) marriage. Carroll, believing Ching guilty, helps him to escape from jail. When he attempts to make Ching and Vera flee over the border, Ching protests his innocence and the truth comes out, with Vera confessing. Carroll then forces Vera to make a break with him for the border, leaving Ching to Maria. The sheriff and his men pursue and ambush Vera and Carroll, killing them both.

It was directed by Allan Dwan from a story by James Edward Grant, who wrote the screen play in collaboration with Sloan Nibley. No producer credit is given. Adult fare.

"The Milkman" with Donald O'Connor and Jimmy Durante

(Univ.-Int'l, November; time, 87 min.)

Slapstick in content, this shapes up as an amiable comedy that should give the general run of audiences an amusing time. There is not much that can be said for the story, in spite of the fact that it took four writers to complete the screenplay, but it moves along at a lively pace and serves well enough for the comedy antics of Donald O'Connor and Jimmy Durante, whose engaging personalities are what put this picture over; their way with a quip and a song is enjoyable enough to make one overlook the other shortcomings. The comedy, which stems from O'Connor's misadventures as a rookie milkman, is a hodge-podge of slapstick situations, some of which are dragged out unnecessarily, but most of them are laugh-provoking:—

O'Connor, son of Henry O'Neill, a milk company president, wants employment to keep himself busy, but his father rejects the suggestion because the boy, an ex-GI, suffered from battle fatigue, a condition that made him quack like a duck when he got excited. In desperation, O'Connor turns to Jimmy Durante, an old friend, who worked as a milkman for a rival dairy. On Durante's recommendation, O'Connor, disguising his identity, is given a milk route with the rival company and, in his anxiety to make good, he gets into all sorts of trouble with the customers. Durante, however, manages to cover up the complaints before they reach Paul Harvey, the boss. Meanwhile Harvey was having his own troubles with Elisabeth Risdon, a large stockholder in the dairy, who had installed Jess Barker, her crooked nephew, in the company to protect her interests. Threatened by gamblers because of an unsatisfied debt, Barker steals his

aunt's \$50,000 necklace, conceals it in a bottle of milk, and sends O'Connor to deliver it to the gamblers at their hotel. There, O'Connor gets himself into another mess because of his mistaken belief that the building was on fire, and Durante, to protect O'Connor's job, takes the blame himself. As a result, Durante is fired at Miss Risdon's insistence and loses his right to a pension. O'Connor goes to Miss Risdon's home to plead for Durante and arrives just as she is shot dead mysteriously. He finds himself accused of the murder but eventually discovers the stolen necklace and other clues that point to Barker as the culprit. Aided by Durante and an army of milk drivers, O'Connor clears himself by capturing Barker and the gamblers after a hectic chase. It all ends with the rival companies merging, while O'Connor merges with Piper Laurie, Harvey's daughter.

It was produced by Ted Richmond, and directed by Charles T. Barton, from a screen play by Martin Ragaway, Leonard Stern, James O'Hanlon and Albert Beisch, based on a story by the Messrs Ragaway and Stern.

Good for the family.

"Southside 1-1000" with Don DeFore and Andrea King

(Allied Artists, Nov. 12; time, 73 min.)

If one should forget the fact that this type of story has been put into pictures repeatedly, one should enjoy "Southside 1-1000," for it has been produced, and acted well. It is a counterfeiting story, in which the Government agents triumph in the end. The fact that the engraving of the plates takes place in a Federal prison may have happened, for the story is supposedly based on an actual case, but many people may not believe it. The chase towards the end, where the hero attempts to persuade the heroine, head of the ring, to give herself up, offers some thrills. The photography is clear though somewhat dark:—

When the country is flooded with bogus ten-dollar bills, the Treasury Department assigns Don DeFore to the case. He traces the bills to Morris Ankrum, a convicted counterfeiter in Federal prison, who, under a religious guise, managed to make the plates in prison and to conceal them in a bible. DeFore, however, is unable to trace the plates. Through the cooperation of the Los Angeles police, Barry Kelley, a passer of the bogus money, is arrested, but he is bailed out and murdered by the gang lest he squeal. Following up different clues, DeFore learns that the counterfeit gang's headquarters were in a certain Los Angeles hotel. He obtains a room there and, posing as a criminal, contacts the gang and makes a deal to buy \$500,000 worth of the counterfeit money for \$100,000. Kept under surveillance until the deal is concluded, DeFore pretends to court Andrea King, attractive manager of the hotel, and learns that she is Ankrum's daughter. DeFore accompanies the gang to a deserted warehouse where the bogus money was printed, and there comes face to face with Ankrum, who had escaped from the prison hospital. Their meeting results in DeFore being unmasked as a Federal agent. The gang ties him up and sets fire to the warehouse. But Treasury agents, whom DeFore had ingeniously advised of his whereabouts, break into the warehouse in time to save him and capture the counterfeiters. DeFore pursues Andrea, who had escaped with the genuine \$100,000 but she leaps from a river bridge and plunges to her death.

The picture was produced by Maurice and Max King; it was directed by Boris Ingster, from a screen play by Leo Townsend and the director himself, based on a story by Milton H. Raisin and Bert C. Brown.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Two Weeks—With Love" with Jane Powell, Ricardo Montalban and Ann Harding

(MGM, November; time, 92 min.)

A charming comedy with music, produced in Technicolor. The comedy is so plentiful that the audience at the theatre where it was shown to the reviewers kept chuckling all the time. A great deal of the picture's charm is owed to Jane Powell, who acts with vivacity: her part is loveable, and her singing is a delight to the ear. At times the comedy reaches slapstick proportions, but it is good. Ann Harding, who looks youthful, is fine as the mother, as is Louis Calhern, as the father. Carleton Carpenter is a source of amusement because of his gawkiness, and Debbie Reynolds shows signs of real acting ability. Ricardo Montalban is slightly awkward. The action takes place in 1913:—

Ann and Calhern, accompanied by their four children, including Jane, the eldest, Debbie, Gary Gray and Tommy Rettig, go to a summer resort in the Catskills for their annual vacation. Jane, a girl of seventeen, effects a reunion with Phyllis Kirk, a friend of other summers, and before

long finds herself vying with Phyllis for the attentions of Ricardo Montalban, a handsome Cuban who had just arrived at the resort. Jane, however, finds herself at a disadvantage because her parents believed her to be too young for romance, and because they prevented her from dressing modernistically, with a corset; she resented being treated like a child. To aggravate matters, there is a misunderstanding between Montalban and her parents when he brings her home one night soaking wet after she had fallen out of a canoe, for which accident he was blameless. Jane's real troubles start when Phyllis, jealous because Montalban waltzed with Jane at a dance, spreads the word that Jane is corsetless. Feeling disgraced, Jane goes into self-imposed exile, refusing to either eat or leave her room. Her plight sets off a feud between her parents, and Calhern, in desperation, finally buys Jane a corset without realizing that it is a surgical garment, the kind that locks into a stopped position when the wearer bends over. Later, at an amateur show, Jane's younger sister steals Phyllis' dancing shoes, resulting in Jane being drafted to replace her in a tango exhibition dance with Montalban, but when she does a deep bend she is unable to straighten out. Back in the hotel with the corset unbuckled and the differences between mama and papa ironed out, Montalban asks and receives permission to call on Jane when she returns home.

The picture was produced by Jack Cummings, and directed by Roy Rowland, from a screen play by John Larkin and Dorothy Kingsley, based on a story by Mr. Larkin.

Excellent family entertainment.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946, OF HARRISON'S REPORTS, published Weekly at New York, N. Y., for Oct. 1, 1950.

State of New York.

County of New York.

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Al Picoult, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Managing Editor of the HARRISON'S REPORTS and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the acts of March 3, 1933 and July 2, 1946 (section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations), printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher, *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.

Editor, P. S. Harrison, 1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.
Managing Editor, Al Picoult, 1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.

2. That the owner is: *Harrison's Reports, Inc.*, 1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.

P. S. Harrison, 1270 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is 2439.

(Signed) AL PICOULT,

(Managing Editor).

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of September, 1950.

VICTOR H. FRIEND

(My commission expires March 30, 1952.)

"Trio" with an all-British cast

(Paramount, no rel. date set; time, 91 min.)

Comprised of three separate Somerset Maugham short stories, this British-made production is being offered as a successor to last year's "Quartet." Although it falls short of the quality of that picture, it does offer an interesting variety of entertainment, with each of the three stories different in theme. It is, however, the sort of picture that will best be appreciated in arty houses that cater to class audiences, for the stories are of a type that are too subtle for the rank and file movie-goers. A mixture of comedy, satire, drama and romance, each of the stories is well produced, directed and acted, with Mr. Maugham appearing on the screen before each one and narrating a prologue.

The first story, "The Verger," is a fanciful comedy about a kindly middle-aged church verger, who loses his job after seventeen years when it is discovered that he can neither read nor write. Compelled to earn a living elsewhere, he opens up a tobacconist shop, and within a few years owns a chain of them and amasses a fortune. When his bank manager asks him what he thinks he could have been if he were able to read and write, he replies, "Probably a church verger."

The second story, "Mr. Knowall," takes place aboard a steamer and revolves around Nigel Patrick, a London jeweler, an irrepressible character who claims to know everything and who makes himself obnoxious by forcing his presence on every one, including Anne Crawford, who snubs him. In the end, however, he proves himself a gallant gentleman when Anne's husband, whom she had not seen in two years, bets him that he cannot tell whether her pearl necklace is genuine. (Anne had told her husband that she had bought it for a few pounds.) Although aware that the necklace is real and expensive, Patrick, seeing a look of distress on Anne's face, declares it to be a fake.

The third story, "Sanatorium," is an episodic but poignant tale dealing with the personal problems of a group of patients in a tubercular sanatorium. Included are two elderly Scots who quarrel constantly, with one losing all interest in life when the other dies; a married man who resents his wife because she is healthy; and a novelist, who finds the sanatorium's atmosphere strange and unreal. The principal interest, however, lies in the tender romance between Jean Simmons, a virtuous, lovely girl, and Michael Rennie, a dashing fellow with a scandalous past. Although advised that marriage will shorten both their lives, they decide to wed and sacrifice themselves to a brief period of real happiness. Their brave example helps the other patients to adjust their own problems.

It is a Sydney Box production, produced by Antony Darnborough, and directed by Ken Annakin and Harold French, from screen plays by Mr. Maugham, R. C. Sheriff and Noel Langley.

Best suited for mature audiences.

"Two Flags West" with Joseph Cotten, Linda Darnell, Jeff Chandler and Cornel Wilde

(20th Century-Fox, Nov.; time, 92 min.)

"Two Flags West" has an interesting story idea in that it has Confederate prisoners-of-war joining the Union Army to fight hostile Indians in New Mexico. That it has turned out to be no more than a fair melodrama, despite the good performances of the well known cast, is due to a rambling script that is draggy in spots and that places more emphasis on the characterizations than on the action, giving the production a brooding quality. In the closing reels, however, there is a spectacularly thrilling hand-to-hand battle between the Apaches and the Cavalry, which more than makes up for the lack of physical action in the earlier reels. The direction is good, and the outdoor photography fine:—

Rather than endure the rigors of prison, a band of Confederate prisoners-of-war, commanded by Joseph Cotten, accept an offer of amnesty to go out West and fight the Indians under the Union flag, after being promised that they will not be required to turn their weapons against the South. Cornel Wilde, a Union captain, escorts them to a fort commanded by Jeff Chandler, a bitter and frustrated man because an injury had relegated him to frontier duty. Chandler, who had lost a brother in the war, does not hide his contempt for the proud Southerners. Taking refuge at the fort is

Linda Darnell, widow of Chandler's brother, whom Wilde loved. Chandler, secretly in love with her himself, had managed to keep her from going home to California on one pretext or another. Assigned to escort a wagon train with civilians to California, Cotten and his troops plan to desert because Chandler had tricked them into executing two Southerners. Linda, refused permission to go along, stows away, and on the trail, after being discovered, she finds herself drawn to Cotten. On the advice of a Confederate spy, Cotten holds up the plan for desertion and returns to the fort with his men and Linda. Meanwhile Chandler's men had captured an Apache chief's son, whom Chandler kills in a fit of rage. This act provokes a full-scale Indian attack on the fort, at a time when Cotten and his men are away on another mission, with definite plans to desert. Learning that the fort with its women and children was under attack, Cotten and his troops return to join the bloody battle, in which Wilde loses his life. With the fort facing annihilation, the Apaches offer to stop the massacre if the officer who killed the chief's son is handed over to them. Chandler, to save the others, hands his command over to Cotten and bravely leaves the fort to satisfy the Apaches' demand for his life. When an army courier arrives with news that the Civil War is ended, Linda decides to remain at the fort with Cotten.

Casey Robinson wrote the screen play and produced it, based on a story by Frank S. Nugent and Curtis Kenyon. It was directed by Robert Wise.

Suitable for the family.

"Harvey" with James Stewart and Josephine Hull

(Univ.-Int'l, no rel. date set; time, 104 min.)

A good comedy, based on the highly successful prize-winning stage play of the same title, but, in view of the fact that Universal is considering a road-show policy for this picture at advanced admissions, it should be pointed out that it is by no means a great or extraordinary entertainment, one that would warrant this special type of handling. As a matter of fact, the picture, being a sort of whimsical fantasy, with considerable humor that is subtle, satirical and meaningful, may not register too well with the younger element and the action fans. The fame of the play, however, coupled with the drawing power of James Stewart, should make it an outstanding box-office attraction, particularly in metropolitan centers.

Briefly, the story revolves around Stewart, an amiable drunkard, who loves humanity and who keeps Josephine Hull, his middle-aged sister, and Victoria Horne, her marriageable daughter, in a constant state of nervousness and embarrassment by insisting that he is always accompanied by "Harvey," a six-foot invisible rabbit. Matters reach the boiling point when Stewart arrives home one afternoon and breaks up a very social musicale by introducing his invisible buddy to the alarmed women guests. His sister decides to place him in a mental institution, but when she confides to Charles Drake, a young psychiatrist, that she, too, has seen "Harvey," he has her committed and sees to it that Stewart is released. Cecil Kellaway, the head psychiatrist, discovers the error and finds himself threatened with a suit for damages. Meanwhile he goes searching for Stewart and finds him in a bar where, after several drinks and a talk with Stewart, he, too, becomes convinced that "Harvey" exists. In the events that follow all end up at the institution, where Drake reveals that he can give Stewart an injection that will make him forget "Harvey" and be like any ordinary irascible human being. His sister consents, but just before Drake gives Stewart the serum she calls off the treatment lest it cause a change in her brother's sweet and generous disposition. It ends with Stewart and his invisible rabbit walking up a moonlit road together, a happy, untroubled pair.

A brief synopsis cannot do justice to the humor in the story, much of it delightful and some of it hilarious. Stewart is excellent in the leading role; his casual ease and amiability, and the quiet manner in which he explains his relationship with "Harvey," are fascinating. Miss Hull, repeating the role she played on the stage, is just perfect as the distraught but understanding sister. Peggy Dow, as a nurse; Jesse White, as an asylum attendant; and William Lynn, as the family lawyer, are fine in lesser parts.

It was produced by John Beck, and directed by Henry Koster, from a screen play by Mary C. Chase and Oscar Brodney, based on Miss Chase's play.

Suitable for the family, but children may not understand it.

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COMPETITIVE BIDDING

By Abram F. Myers

(Editor's Note: Under the preceding heading, the following address was made by Mr. Abram F. Myers, Chairman of the Board of Directors and General Counsel of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors, at the organization's recent national convention in Pittsburgh.

Because Mr. Myers' views, particularly on an all-important problem such as competitive bidding, are always of great interest to the exhibitors, I am reproducing his speech in full.)

Mr. President and ladies and gentlemen of the Convention:

The topic assigned to me for discussion is competitive bidding as practiced in the motion picture business.

I wish this topic could have been held over until tomorrow when the chief sales executive of the five largest film companies will be here. The problems presented by competitive bidding should be solved in conference with the general sales manager as well as their lawyers.

But solve them we must because competitive bidding is one of the chief sources of irritation and dissatisfaction in the industry today. As the practice spreads, exhibitor complaints mount at an alarming rate. And when these complaints are lodged with the sales representatives, they protest that they are as unhappy with the situation as are the complaining exhibitors.

I have heard general sales managers say they wish they had never heard of competitive bidding; that it is their greatest headache, their most constant source of worry. One said to me recently, "How do you think I feel when I have to tell old friends, men I have been dealing with for years, that I can no longer do business with them in the old way; that because some rival exhibitor had suddenly become ambitious to take over the run, I must now require my old friend to bid on every picture?"

Now you know and I know that competitive bidding has the tendency and has had the effect materially to increase film rentals. I do not believe that statement will be challenged anywhere. Indeed, sales representatives have told me of their alarm over some bids they have received because they were so excessive as to indicate a predatory or monopolistic purpose on the part of the bidders.

As against those protestations of dislike for competitive bidding come many stories from exhibitors to the effect that the system employed by the film companies—or some of them—is not competitive bidding at all. They say that as practiced by some companies, it is merely a method of peddling a film from one exhibitor to another, via the telephone, until a very high price is reached, whereupon the film is licensed to the exhibitor to whom the distributor wanted to sell it in the first place.

Let me cite an example. An Allied member, an able and experienced independent now is challenged by a rival independent who has re-opened an old theatre which the Allied member formerly operated and later abandoned. There is reason to believe that the film companies—that is, those with whom he is accustomed to deal—would prefer to sell their films to the Allied man who has a long and honorable record in the business.

But this is how it works. The Allied man is invited to bid on a picture. The only way he can initiate a deal for that picture is to submit a bid. This he does, offering what on the basis of his experience he believes to be a fair price—one that will yield a profit on the engagement. Later he received a telephone call from the exchange manager saying, in substance, "The bids received on the picture were not satisfactory, so it is no longer subject to bidding. Now we are negotiating. If you will change your offer in certain respects (stating them) you will get the picture."

Now the Allied man never learned what his rival offered, and certainly his rival did not know about this call to the Allied man. This is not competitive bidding. Even when it is conducted without telephone calls, it does not conform to any known form of competitive bidding. It is blind selling of the worst kind, a device for jacking up prices and, in some instances, is fraudulent in its pretenses.

The only legitimate methods of competitive bidding, so far as I am aware, are (1) public auctions where the bidders confront one another and the whole process is conducted in the open; and (2) bidding on public contracts where sealed bids are received and opened for public inspection on a day named.

Now you may conclude that the foregoing description of how competitive bidding is conducted, and its inevitable tendency to increase film rentals, casts some doubt on the sincerity of those sales executives who claim to be opposed to competitive bidding. I can only suggest that perhaps there are differences of opinion, as well as variations in practice, as between different sales executive and different companies.

But the issue of veracity is, for the time being, wholly beside the mark. For present purposes I am going to accept all such claims at face value. I am going to assume that they are made in good faith. I intend to proceed on the theory that the film companies and the exhibitors have a common problem which can and should be solved by negotiation and conference leading to an agreement on appropriate court action.

This is the big issue affecting distributors and exhibitors alike. Its proper solution will go far toward the elimination of existing chaos in the business. One aspect of it would be to rescue from the ambiguities of the decree the basic principle that a manufacturer or distributor, acting alone and not in concert with others, has the right to choose his own customers in bona fide transactions and not in restraint of trade.

There is little point in clamoring for elaborate and expensive conciliation and arbitration systems for the pinpricks of the business so long as the running sores go unhealed.

So in a mood of forbearance, let us look at the distributor's side of the question and try to understand his point of view. As you know, competitive bidding was introduced into this business, not by the distributors, but by the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York in the Government's anti-trust suit against the eight major producers and distributors. That court thought competitive bidding would be a cure-all for the ills of the industry and made the practice mandatory.

When the case was appealed to the United States Supreme

(Continued on back page)

COMPETITIVE BIDDING

(Continued from back page)

stand in a preferred position." Again: "If a premium is placed on purchasing power, the court-created system may be a powerful factor towards increasing the concentration of economic power in the industry instead of cleansing the competitive system of unwholesome practices."

There is no occasion to apologize for an interpretation of the decree, or for an amendment, which will give effect to the true purpose of the Supreme Court to restore a balance within the industry by granting special favors to the independent exhibitors who, in the language of the Supreme Court, "have been the victims of the massed purchasing power of the larger units in the industry." For, the court reminds us, "it is largely out of the ruins of the small operators that the large empires of exhibitors have been built."

It is my view that the words "or others," properly construed according to the rule *ejusdem generis*,² must relate back to the words "affiliated theatres and circuit theatres," representing what the Supreme Court has referred to as "The massed purchasing power of the larger units in the industry," and surely were not intended to bring within the restrictive provisions of the clause independent exhibitors who were not—and are not—parties to the suit, who have been charged with no law violations and against whom no proof was offered and no findings were made.

But whether I am as right as rain or as wrong as Corrigan, is of no moment because counsel for the film companies will not adopt my interpretation—and if I were in their situation, I do not know that I would, either. There is too much at stake to proceed without judicial assurance that my interpretation is right.

On the other hand, counsel for the distributors should be willing to cooperate with us in working out a solution, because they have no assurance that competitive bidding is a shield and buckler in all competitive situations. I am not too much impressed, at the present time, by statistics showing the number of cases in which pictures have been awarded to an independent exhibitor as against a circuit. From the complaints which have arisen it is possible that those independents are being bled white in the process; and if so, the manner of this bleeding may itself give rise to serious legal consequences.

If any independent exhibitor should fail because he was forced to compete for every picture against one having a long purse, it is quite conceivable that he too would have a cause of action, and a stronger one, inasmuch as his undoing resulted from the employment by the distributors of a device which the Supreme Court has condemned.

So what does Allied propose to do about it? I can say Allied, now, because this question had the full attention of the Board of Directors on Sunday morning, and the Board has acted.

The Board of Directors has instructed your general counsel to confer with the attorneys for the film companies and/or with the Department of Justice to see if we can agree upon an interpretation, or an amendment, or upon the elimination of the words "or others," to the end that competitive bidding may be confined to those situations which were within the intentment of the lawsuit and the practice reformed and made more workable in those situations where, conceivably, it may have some usefulness.

Delicate and troublesome questions are involved. For example, does the phrase "circuit theatres" include only the affiliated circuits and/or those which may be formed as a result of divorcement? Does it include the powerful circuits whose operations have been held to be illegal in recent years such as Crescent, Schine and Griffith? Does it extend to smaller circuits which, nevertheless, may be said to wield "massed purchasing power?" And if the latter, at what number of theatres should the line be drawn?

It is because of these hard practical problems that I asked the Board of Directors to authorize the appointment of an advisory committee of experienced, able exhibitors and exhibitor leaders representing the different classes of independent theatres and the areas most affected by bidding, to work with me on this task. President Rembusch has named the following committee which, for experience and ability, it would be difficult to match: Col. H. A. Cole, of Dallas (who has already given careful consideration to the problem and to whom I am indebted for numerous suggestions); Nathan Yamins, of Boston; Jack Kirsch, of Chicago; Ray

Branch, of Hastings, Mich.; Sidney E. Samuelson, of Philadelphia.

Your counsel and your committee are going to do everything they can to bring about an early satisfactory settlement of this irritating and dangerous condition. When and if an agreement is reached with the parties to the suit, either on an interpretation or an amendment, the same will have to be submitted to the statutory court for its approval.

The way for such a proceeding is paved by Section IX of the decree which reads as follows:

Jurisdiction of this cause is retained for the purpose of enabling any of the parties to this decree, and no others, to apply to the court at any time for such orders or direction as may be necessary or appropriate for the construction, modification, or carrying out of the same, for the enforcement of compliance therewith, and for the punishment of violations thereof, or for other or further relief.

Here, ladies and gentlemen, is definite, constructive action taken by your Board of Directors in your interest. Let us all hope that our proposals will be given sincere, unprejudiced consideration by all to whom they are addressed. If this job can be done through agreement and understanding, it will constitute clear evidence that our industry has reached maturity, and in the manner of intra-industry cooperation we will then be encouraged to enlarge our horizons.

¹ Sec. II, Sub-par. 8 (b): "Each license shall be granted solely upon the merits and without discrimination if favor off affiliates, old customers or others."

Sec. II, Sub-par. 8 (d): "Each license shall be offered and taken theatre by theatre and picture by picture."

² Unless there is a clear manifestation to the contrary general words, not specific or limited but following particular descriptive words should be construed as applicable to cases or matters of like kind with those described by the particular words. *United States v. Stever*, 222 U.S. 167 and cases cited by U.S. Supreme Court Digest Annotated, Vol. 12, Tit. "Statutes," Sec. 173, pp. 643-646.

The decree if enforceable against the independent exhibitors, limiting them in their normal business operations, constitutes judicial legislation and is invalid. The difficulty is for the independents to initiate a proceeding or to find a forum in which to try out this question. As a matter of interpretation—any interpretation which endangers the validity of the decree should be abandoned in favor of one which will sustain its validity. "A construction of a statute which makes it unconstitutional should not be adopted if the statute is reasonably susceptible of another which renders it valid." *Sully v. American National Bank*, 178 U.S. 289 and cases cited in U.S. Supreme Court Digest, Vol. 12, Tit. "Statutes," Sec. 106, pp. 568-569.

TRUST CASE DECISION NOW ABSOLUTELY FINAL

The Government's twelve-year-old anti-trust suit against the major companies was brought to a final close on Monday of this week when the U.S. Supreme Court denied the petitions of Loew's, Inc., 20th Century-Fox and Warner Bros. to reconsider its June 5 decision, which affirmed the decree handed down by the New York Statutory Court on February 8.

In refusing to grant a rehearing to the three remaining defendants, the high court removed the last legal hope they might have had to upset the lower court's decree.

Except for the possibility that each of the remaining defendants might negotiate a consent decree with the Department of Justice, all three must now carry out the divorcement and divestiture provisions of the decree, which call for submission to the court within six months of a plan for the separation of their exhibition operations from their production and distribution business, with complete divestiture and divorcement to be accomplished within three years. (There is a legal question as to whether the time limit starts from July 10, the date the high court's mandate affirming the decree reached the lower court, or from June 5, on which date the Supreme Court handed down its ruling.)

The decree provides also that the Government and the defendants must within one year submit respectively plans for divestiture of theatre interests other than those heretofore ordered to be divested, "which they believe to be adequate to satisfy the requirements of the Supreme Court decision."

Moreover, any distributing company that will result from the divorcement is enjoined from engaging in the exhibition business, and any exhibiting company that results is likewise enjoined from engaging in the distribution business, unless specific permission is granted by the court upon a showing that any such engagement will not unreasonably restrain competition in the respective fields.

"Madness of the Heart" with Margaret Lockwood and Paul Dupuis

(Univ.-Int'l, October; time, 91 min.)

Although the hypercritical may look upon this British-made drama as just so much "hokum," most mature moviegoers, particularly women, should find it to be a fairly gripping and poignant tale of a blind bride's struggle for marital happiness. Much of the film's effectiveness is due to the fine portrayal by Margaret Lockwood as the sightless bride; she plays the role with skill, and there is considerable emotional impact in the heartaches she suffers as the result of the subtle but evil machinations of a vindictive woman—her husband's former fiancée. The story strikes an overly-theatrical note in spots, particularly at the finish, but despite these shortcomings one's interest is maintained throughout. The direction is fine, and the production values very good:—

Margaret, confidential secretary to a London doctor, meets and falls in love with Paul Dupuis, a French nobleman. She becomes blind during their whirlwind courtship and, rather than be pitied by Dupuis, seeks sanctuary in a convent. After finding life as a novice too difficult, she returns to the outside world and finds Dupuis still waiting for her. He marries her and takes her to his family's chateau in France. The family makes her welcome, but it soon becomes obvious that Raymond Lovell, Dupuis' father, did not approve of a blind woman as his son's wife. Kathleen Byron, a neighbor and Dupuis' former fiancée, is especially kind to Margaret, but as time goes on her vicious intentions become clear as she takes advantage of Margaret's blindness, trying to undermine her confidence and even attempting to kill her. When Dupuis goes away for several days, Kathleen, by stealing a letter Margaret had dictated for him, leads him to believe that it was written to Margaret by a secret lover. He accuses Margaret of infidelity and, in her upset condition, she suffers an accident and loses her unborn child. She leaves him and returns to London, where she undergoes an operation that restores her sight. She then returns to France and, still feigning blindness, unmasks Kathleen's evil scheming when she attempts once again to kill her. Dupuis father, who had been in league with Kathleen, refuses to share in any more of her conspiracies and sends a telegram to Dupuis to return to his wife. Kathleen, in an attempt to intercept the telegram, is killed in an automobile crash, following which Margaret and Dupuis are reunited.

It is a J. Arthur Rank presentation, produced by Richard Wainwright. It was directed by Charles Bennett from his own screen play, based on a novel by Flora Sandstrom.

Adult fare.

"Last of the Buccaneers" with Paul Henreid Jack Oakie

(Columbia, October; time, 79 min.)

The Technicolor photography gives this swashbuckling adventure melodrama a definite lift, but not enough to help it rise above the level of program fare; it is only just fair in entertainment values. Set in 1812 and revolving around a supposed episode in the career of Jean Lafitte, the famous Louisiana pirate, the story is ordinary and the treatment routine. Discriminating audiences probably will be bored with it, for the action is far-fetched and the comedy strained, but it should give ample satisfaction in small-town and neighborhood theatres, for it moves along at a fairly-fast pace and whips up enough excitement to satisfy the demands of the less critical. The acting is adequate, considering the weak material:—

Having been a key factor in the successful defense of New Orleans after it had been attacked by the British, Paul Henreid (as Lafitte) feels ill-rewarded when he is deprived of his ships by the Governor of Louisiana, whose decision had been influenced by Edgar Barrier, a crafty shipowner. Henreid allies himself with Venezuela, then at war with Spain, and he and his men start their operations by capturing at a New Orleans dock a Spanish ship owned by Barrier. In the months that pass, Henreid, together with Jack Oakie, his chief aide, leads the buccaneers on many successful raids on Spanish

shipping and establishes headquarters on Galveston Island, where the fabulous loot is hidden in an underground cave. All goes well until one of Henreid's captains, against orders, sinks an American vessel. Henreid promptly hangs the offender, but news of the sinking causes bitter resentment in New Orleans. Karin Booth, Barrier's niece, who is in love with Henreid, volunteers to go to Galveston to either prove his innocence or obtain evidence of his guilt. He proves his innocence to her and makes preparations for their wedding, but one of her aides, finding evidence that loot from an American vessel is in the cave, notifies the authorities in New Orleans and soldiers are dispatched to capture the island. Aware that Henreid was innocent of any deliberate wrongdoing against the Americans, Karin escapes with him in a fishing boat while the soldiers reduce the island to ruins.

It was produced by Sam Katzman, and directed by Lew Landers, from an original screen play by Robert E. Kent.

Harmless for the family.

"Deported" with Marta Toren and Jeff Chandler

(Univ.-Int'l, November; time, 89 min.)

A pretty good crime melodrama that is made all the more interesting by the fact that it has been photographed entirely against the authentic backgrounds in Italy. Revolving around an American gangster who is deported to his native Italy, the story deals with his efforts to recover stolen money hidden in the states, despite the surveillance of American and Italian authorities, who anticipate that he will make such an attempt. Although the story is lacking in hard-hitting action, it manages to generate considerable suspense, not only because of the gangster's efforts to outwit the authorities, but also because of his efforts to keep from his family and friends the truth about his past, for they regarded him as a local boy who made good in America. Jeff Chandler gives a convincing portrayal as the gangster and, toward the finish, wins audience sympathy because of his reformation. His romance with Marta Toren, a widowed Italian countess who distributed American foodstuffs to the poor, is an important part of the story:—

Deported to Italy after serving five years in Sing Sing, Chandler, upon his arrival in Naples, is ordered by the Italian police to proceed immediately to Marbella, his hometown, and to remain there for thirty days. Before his departure, Chandler encounters Richard Rober, a former henchman, who demands a cut of the \$100,000 he and Chandler has stolen. Chandler informs him that he had left the money hidden in the United States, and that he had no intention of sharing it since he had paid for the crime. Arriving in Marbella, Chandler goes to live with his uncle. The townspeople regard him as a successful American business man. He meets and becomes enamored of Marta, and helps her to distribute American relief supplies to the poor. To get the stolen money out of the United States, Chandler cooks up a scheme whereby his New York contact uses the loot to buy relief supplies for shipment to Marta's organization. Meanwhile he makes a deal with Carlo Rizzo, a local black marketeer, to steal the supplies after they arrive and to sell them in the black market for a fabulous profit. The townspeople are overwhelmed when the supplies arrive, and Marta, innocent of Chandler's scheme, reveals to them that he is their "benefactor." Becoming ashamed, Chandler calls off the deal with Rizzo, tells Marta the truth about himself, and prepares to leave town. Rizzo, disregarding Chandler's wishes, gets together with Rober and prepares to hijack the supplies. But Chandler, anticipating such a move, hides in the warehouse and gets into a gun battle that ends with Rober's death and with the police showing up in time to capture the gang. Chandler, too, is taken into custody, but, when Marta promises to stand by him, the police indicate that he will be let off lightly because the net result of his machinations was the feeding of a hungry town.

It was produced by Robert Buckner, and directed by Robert Siodmak. Mr. Buckner wrote the screen play, based on a story by Lionel Shapiro. Adult fare.

Court all exhibitor organizations without exception, the three non-theatre-owning film companies and Paramount Pictures, Inc., all of them, joined in condemning the provision of the District Court's decree which required bidding. Four of the theatre-owning film companies—Loew's, 20th Century, Warner Bros. and RKO—supported competitive bidding as a substitute for theatre divorcement.

When the Supreme Court soundly criticized competitive bidding and ordered that it be stricken from the District Court's decree, we thought we were through with that problem, once and for all time. But the Supreme Court also directed the District Court to do something about the discrimination which the proof showed had been practiced by the distributors in favor of the affiliated theatres and circuit theatres and against the independent exhibitors.

After much travail the District Court evolved the following provision, which became Section II, Paragraph 8 of the decree filed February 8, 1950:

Each of the defendant distributors is enjoined . . . 8. From licensing any feature for exhibition upon any run in any theatre in any other manner than that each license shall be offered and taken theatre by theatre, solely upon the merits and without discrimination in favor of affiliated theatres, circuit theatres—

down to this point, the Court hit the nail squarely on the head, as we shall hereafter see, but then it went one step (perhaps I should say two words) further and spoiled it all, for it added to the otherwise satisfactory provision the words—

or others.

The foregoing was fashioned after and is reminiscent of two passages in the District Court's first decree relating to competitive bidding.¹ The main differences are that there is no requirement for licensing "picture by picture" and there is no provision against discrimination in favor of "old customers." Judge Hand recognized that this similarity might cause confusion and in order to forestall objection hastened to point out that the provision did not contemplate competitive bidding, saying, "it neither involves calling for bids nor licensing picture by picture."

In an endeavor to find the proper interpretation of those two little words, or to lay the foundation for their elimination, let us retrace our steps and refresh our recollections of the Government's suit. It is a cardinal rule of construction that a statute or decree or written instrument shall be construed—or interpreted—so as to give effect to the intent and purpose of the legislature, court, or author responsible for the writing.

Therefore, we must look to the purpose of the Government's suit, the law violations to be enjoined and the evils to be remedied, as disclosed by the pleadings, the proof and the findings in that case. In order to do that, it is not necessary to review or summarize the ponderous records in the case or to cite more than a few passages from the decisions of the courts.

Instead, I am going to call on you to resort to your own memories—those of you whose memories run back to the days preceding the filing of the Government's suit in July, 1938.

The great evil of the business, the menace to every independent exhibitor, was the flagrant discrimination practiced by the distributors in favor of the affiliated theatres and the theatres operated by the powerful circuits.

In the era preceding the filing of the Government suit, no independent exhibitor was secure in his business or property. He did not know at what moment an affiliated circuit, or other powerful circuit such as Schine, Crescent or Griffith, might build against him and take away of his product on whatever run he enjoyed. That "system of fixed runs and clearances," as the courts described it, which included the circuit theatres and excluded the independents, was the evil at which the Government's suit was aimed and for which the courts were seeking a remedy.

Independent exhibitors in their vexation over some of the incidents of the decree are prone to forget the protection and security which they have gained from the Government's insistence that the law must be obeyed.

Now I am convinced that Section II, Paragraph 8, quoted above, justifies resort to competitive bidding, theatre by theatre on the merits, only when an independent exhibitor seeks to break down that wall of runs and clearances which has secured to the affiliated circuits and the large circuits a monopoly in many areas. That is the only interpretation that is consistent with the records in the several anti-trust cases involving major film companies and the major circuits.

But in view of the wording of the anti-discrimination clause, I recognize that acceptance of my interpretation by the distributors at this time involves the assumption of a grave risk.

Counsel for one of the film companies, who must remain unidentified, said that as a matter of first impression he thought I was right. "But," he added, "there is too much at stake for me to advise our sales department to proceed along those lines. For if I did, and the court should later rule that your interpretation was wrong, then I would have let my company in for more lawsuits and untold damages."

And when we consider those two little words, "or others," at the end of the sentence, we must admit that the film company lawyers have a point—and certainly a grave responsibility—and I am going to proceed on the theory that they too are acting in good faith as long as they show any disposition to cooperate with us in working out a solution of the problem.

Now there are those who will say—who have in fact said—that what Allied now proposes is that the distributors may discriminate in favor of the independent exhibitors, but not against them. That is one way of putting it, and it opens the door for some amusing wisecracks, but it does not tell the whole story.

Prior to any court order the distributors, in dealing with competitive situations involving only independent exhibitors, did a pretty fair job of protecting their old customers without resort to unlawful discrimination. The Supreme Court recognized the propriety, in such situations, of maintaining old-customer relationships for, in striking down the competitive system, it said: "The system uproots business arrangements and established relationships with no apparent overall benefit to the small independent exhibitor."

And the purpose of the bidding system was aptly summed up by the court when it said: "The system was designed . . . to remedy the difficulty of any theatre to break into or change the existing systems of runs or clearances."

Therefore, the effect of permitting an independent exhibitor to initiate bidding against an affiliated or other large circuit, without permitting a circuit to take like action against an independent, is merely to give effect to a legal remedy for an unlawful state of things. It is not one-way discrimination, it is retribution; and there is no rule of law or ethics which says that the innocent must share the punishment of the guilty.

As a matter of fact, the District Court, acting on the mandate of the Supreme Court, clearly sanctioned discrimination in favor of independent exhibitors and against the affiliated circuits in the matter of franchises. Sec. II, Paragraph 5 of the final decree enjoins the distributors "From further performing any existing franchise and from making any franchises in the future, except for the purpose of enabling an independent exhibitor to operate a theatre in competition with a theatre affiliated with a defendant or with theatres in new circuits which may be formed as a result of divorcement."

And it does not require a strained argument to contend that since by the final decree discrimination in favor of "affiliated theatres" and "circuit theatres" is expressly barred by that decree, and "old customers" were eliminated from the category, there was a definite purpose on the part of the courts to sanction discrimination, even price discrimination, in favor of the independents who enjoy an "old customer" status.

For bear in mind that one of the chief criticisms leveled by the Supreme Court against competitive bidding was that if each feature must go to the highest bidder, "those with the greatest purchasing power would seem to be in a favored position." Also: "Those with the longest purse—the exhibitor defendants and the large circuits—would seem to

(Continued on inside page)

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1950

No. 43

TWO SOUND EXHIBITOR PLEAS IN BEHALF OF DISTRIBUTORS WHO PLAY FAIR

Under the heading, "Have You Considered It This Way?" the October 20 bulletin of the Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana had this to say:

"Mr. Schwalberg, Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Smith and Mr. Mochrie told the exhibitors attending the Pittsburgh Allied Convention without any quibbling or reservations that they would not tolerate any illegal sales practices by their organizations. Of course, we know that distribution's thinking cannot be 100% changed overnight and that sometimes a company's policy is controverted as it is administered down through the chain of command. We can also understand the reluctance on the part of an exhibitor to really 'go to the mat' when he is the victim of an outlawed sales policy.

"But is that playing fair with those distributors that are completely respecting the law in both letter and spirit? If you accept a picture forced on you by company A it may mean the elimination of a program from company B that has honestly offered you picture by picture. Could you honestly blame the latter if they did not begin to wonder if they were not simply penalizing themselves for no purpose if the violator is allowed to get away with his forcing? Unless exhibitors militantly fight against any illegal practice they will begin to lose ground already gained rather than continue to make further progress. And it isn't fair to the fellow who is playing according to the rules."

In more or less the same vein, Charles Niles, chairman of the Allied Caravan of Iowa and Nebraska, had this to say in part under the heading, "Fear Selling," in his October 14 bulletin:

"This type of selling must be stopped. The idea that any exhibitor should fear retaliation for attempting to get an unfair deal straightened out is unthinkable in America. This is not Hitler's Germany, or Stalin's Russia; this is America—a land of freedom. All independent exhibitors have been granted the right of selective buying and you can turn this into a powerful weapon to get equitable deals if you have the intestinal fortitude to use it. We have said before, go along with a company that gives you a fair deal and attempt to liquidate as many pictures as possible, but with the company that is unfair to you, give them a kick in the pants; buy just what you want even if it is one picture per year. Let us take an example: An exhibitor is playing Paramount and has a fair deal that is making him or her money. Along comes THE HEIRESS. It is our opinion if Paramount is treating you right that you owe an obligation to try and liquidate the picture. It is our understanding that Paramount will date THE HEIRESS on any playing time on terms . . . that will at least bring this Academy Award picture to the people in your town that do want to see it. On the other hand, if Paramount has been giving you a bad time, I would never play THE HEIRESS. In fact, I wouldn't play anything except the top pictures and I would make Paramount sell these without gimmicks to me which is my right under the court's decision. By gimmicks I mean pricing the top pictures exorbitantly to circumvent selective buying. It is a two-way street; we can't expect to make it 100% our way. On the other hand, we can give to the fair com-

panies and we can keep from the unfair companies. . . ."

If any one from among the distribution side of the fence thinks that the Allied regional bulletins are all toughness and no fairness, he had better revise his views. And the foregoing statements are the proof.

Despite some distributor statements to the contrary, HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that the average exhibitor expects and demands no more than a fair deal. If fair consideration is given to an exhibitor's individual problems at the time of the writing of the deal so that he is made to feel that he is not humbling himself to get what he is justly entitled to, that exhibitor, in the opinion of this paper, will always be ready and willing to recognize the problems of the distributor who had given him such fair treatment.

Lest any distributor executive wonder if it will pay him to gain the good will of his customers, he should be reminded that there was a time in 1931 when you could have fired a machine gun into the exchanges of a certain company without any danger of hitting an exhibitor. For a few years prior to 1931, the salesmen of that company, having the best product, strutted around like "king pins" and treated the exhibitors ruthlessly. But when the quality of that company's product deteriorated, the exhibitors retaliated by refusing to support it. This experience taught that company a good lesson, and they are now, of course, acting differently.

There comes a time when every distributing company finds itself saddled with one or more pictures that are below par from the box-office point of view, and it is at such a time that the company is greatly in need of exhibitor support. With the exercise of some good faith and reasonable dealings now, the distributor can create the good will that will pay off in time of stress.

A COMMENDABLE CHANGE IN POLICY

20th Century-Fox has announced that it has abandoned its "scheduled performances" policy in connection with the showings of "All About Eve," and that it will permit the picture's exhibition on a continuous performance basis throughout the country.

The "scheduled performances" policy, which called for tickets for specific performances and which prohibited the seating of patrons after the start of the feature, did not prove to be workable at its test engagement at the Roxy Theatre in New York, first, because many people who arrived after the picture started refused to wait around for the next show, and secondly, because many potential patrons, despite the extensive advertising and publicity given to the plan, did not understand what it was all about when they came to the theatre.

After one week of "scheduled performances," the Roxy reverted to continuous performances and has been enjoying a record-breaking business ever since the change was made.

In spite of the fact that the "scheduled performances" policy has not proved successful, 20th Century-Fox is to be commended highly, not only for its diligent efforts to introduce a unique idea in exhibition and thus stimulate greater attendance, but also for being big enough to admit frankly that the plan had failed and to abandon it lest it prove a source of trouble to the exhibitors.

"Hit Parade of 1951" with John Carroll and Marie McDonald

(Republic, October 15; time, 85 min.)

Just a fair comedy with music, best suited for double-billing situations. If spectators can overlook the triteness of the mistaken-identity plot, which is one of those implausible dual role affairs centering around two characters who are identically alike, they should find it diverting. It has a few good gags that provoke laughter, but for the most part the comedy is feeble. As a matter of fact, the plot unfolds in so obvious a manner that one knows in advance just what will happen. Worked into the footage are several moderate production numbers, including seven tuneful songs:—

John Carroll, a devil-may-care gambler, loses \$200,000 to Grant Withers, owner of a Las Vegas gambling casino, who gives him forty-eight hours to square the debt. Learning that he looked exactly like "Eddie Paul" (also played by Carroll), star crooner on a Los Angeles radio show, Carroll, searching feverishly for a solution to his gambling debt dilemma, manages with the help of his pals (Mikhail Rasumny and Frank Fontaine) to spirit "Eddie" to Las Vegas. Meanwhile he impersonates the crooner in Los Angeles and romances with Marie McDonald, "Eddie's" co-star and girl-friend, who is delightfully surprised by the manly change in her "boy-friend's" character. In Las Vegas, "Eddie," taken for Carroll, is passed off to Estelita Rodriguez, Carroll's torrid girl-friend, as an amnesia victim, and she is turn is thrilled by the courteous manner her "boy-friend" had acquired. Under the influence of champagne, "Eddie" foils a holdup of the casino, and Withers, thinking that he is Carroll, gratefully grants him more credit to give him an opportunity to square the gambling debt. "Eddie," who had never gambled in his life, breaks the bank and even wins back Carroll's IOU's. In the series of mixups that follow, "Eddie" and Carroll finally meet and, after explanations, apprise each other of what their respective girl-friends like to see in a lover. They then return to their proper localities and behave accordingly, without either Marie or Estelita becoming aware of the switch. It all ends with a double wedding in Las Vegas, with neither girl being absolutely certain about whom she married until "Eddie" solves the riddle by bursting into song.

It was produced and directed by John H. Auer from a story by Aubrey Wisberg, who collaborated on the screen play with Lawrence Kimble and Elizabeth Reinhardt.

Harmless for the family.

"Harriet Craig" with Joan Crawford and Wendell Corey

(Columbia, November; time, 94 min.)

A fairly interesting domestic drama, well produced, directed and acted, but those who look for fast action may find it tiresome because it is mostly dialogue. Based on the Pulitzer Prize stage play, "Craig's Wife," which was produced as a silent picture by Pathe in 1928, and as a "talkie" by Columbia in 1936, it makes for an absorbing psychological study, but as entertainment it is cheerless and unpleasant, for it deals with the actions of a cold, calculating woman, whose chief thoughts are for her

own financial security. Joan Crawford's acting is very good; she makes of the mercenary leading character a hateful woman, one who is completely devoid of audience sympathy. Although she gets her just deserts at the finish, the picture ends on a tragic note—a broken home and marriage—leaving one in an unhappy frame of mind:—

Wendell Corey, a fairly well-to-do electrical engineer, is so much in love with Joan, his wife, that he does not realize that she is a selfish woman with a passion to dominate everyone, including himself, and that she had been shaping his future for her own benefit. Even K. T. Stevens, her cousin who lived with them, was unconsciously dominated by Joan's predatory possessiveness. Bill Bishop, Corey's assistant, is in love with Miss Stevens, but Joan discourages the attachment lest it remove her cousin from her sphere of domination. Through clever maneuvering, Joan manages to keep Corey's friends away from their home and invites instead prominent society people, including Raymond Greenleaf, Corey's employer, and Lucille Watson, his wife. Miss Watson takes a liking to Corey and privately induces her husband to give him a promotion, one that entailed a three-month business trip to Japan. Joan, afraid that Corey may never return if he escapes from her control, tries unsuccessfully to make him turn down the assignment. Desperate, she visits his employer and, through guileful inference, leads him to believe that Corey is dishonest. As a result, Corey loses the promotion. Heartbroken, Corey questions his employer's wife and learns of the disparaging references Joan had given her husband. He goes home for a showdown with Joan. She tries to lie her way out of the situation and, in the course of the argument, it comes out that she had also schemed to break up the romance between Bishop and Miss Stevens. Shocked, Miss Stevens leaves her, as had the servants, who hated her. Corey, now seeing Joan for the grasping, dominating woman that she is, upbraids her for her attitude. She then tells him that she tolerated him for the security he could give her in their richly-appointed home, but that she now needed him because she was going to have a baby. This statement, too, proves to be a lie when he attempts to phone the family doctor. Utterly revolted by her character, Corey walks out, telling Joan that she may keep the house she worships. She finds herself completely alone—a woman despised by all.

It was produced by William Dozier and directed by Vincent Sherman from a screen play by Joseph Walker, based on George Kelly's play.

Adult fare.

"Blues Busters" with Leo Gorcey and the Bowery Boys

(Monogram, Oct. 29; time, 67 min.)

Good! It is a better-than-average "Bowery Boys" picture. This time Leo Gorcey and his gang conduct a night-club, with Huntz Hall as the main singing attraction, for he had gained a fine crooner's voice after a tonsil operation. The dubbed in voice used for Hall is very good and should give great pleasure to those who will see the picture. There is plentiful comedy, as is usually the case with pictures directed

by William Beaudine. The action keeps the spectator interested all the way through. The only weakness is in the ending, which shows Hall losing his voice; the audience may feel that it had been let down. The photography is of the best:—

When Gorcey and his gang notice that a tonsilectomy had given Hall a fine singing voice, they decide to profit from it. They remodel the sweet shop that was owned by Bernard Gorcey, their friend, open it as a night-club, and establish Hall as their singing star. Hall's voice attracts the crowds, resulting in a loss of business to Craig Stevens, owner of the Rio Cabana Club across the street. To get his business back, Stevens decides to steal Hall from the Gorcey gang. He instructs Adele Jergens, his sweetie, to obtain Hall's signature on a contract. Adele tricks Hall into signing the contract by making him believe that it was merely an autograph. With the contract in hand, Stevens compels Hall to sing in his own night-club. Stevens meets his Waterloo, however, when he takes on a new "flame"; Adele, incensed at being discarded, goes to Gorcey and reveals to him the trickery she had used to obtain Hall's signature to the contract. With this information on hand, Gorcey drags Hall away from Stevens' night-club. On the opening night, however, it is found that Hall can no longer sing; the tissue that had covered his larynx following the operation had dissolved. Thus the dreams of Gorcey and his gang go up in smoke.

Jan Grippio produced it, and William Beaudine directed it from an original screen play by Charles R. Marion.

Fine for family audiences.

"Hot Rod" with Jimmy Lydon and Gloria Winters

(Monogram, Oct. 22; time, 61 min.)

Good for double-feature billing. The action is fast and there is considerable human interest in many of the situations. There is also comedy here and there. A few of the scenes are exciting. The only weakness in the story lies in the fact that the father of the hero does not believe his son's story that his car had been stolen and that he had not been involved in any hit-and-run accident, but this defect will undoubtedly be overlooked. The slight romance is pleasant. The photography is good:—

Jimmy Lydon, son of Art Baker, a judge opposed to hot rods, buys an old car for his newspaper delivery route. In deference to his father, Jimmy had no intention of turning his car into a hot rod, but when Gloria Winters accepts the attentions of Tommy Bond, owner of a speedy hot rod, Jimmy converts his car and thus regains her affections. While Jimmy and Gil Stratton, Jr., his pal, deliver papers, Tommy steals Jimmy's car as a prank. He becomes involved in a hit-and-run accident, and the owner of the car is traced through the license number. Jimmy reports the disappearance of the car to the police, but they refuse to believe his story because he had made the report after they had received word of the accident. Jimmy's father, too, refuses to believe that the car had been stolen. In court, the owner of the damaged car tells the judge that Jimmy was not the boy who had hit him. At that moment, Tommy, a spectator in court,

arises and confesses his guilt, explaining that he had stolen the car as a prank and without malicious intentions. The judge is overjoyed to learn that his son had told the truth, and the charge against Tommy is dropped when the owner refuses to prosecute. The judge sponsors a legal race track for hot rods, and on the day of the inauguration Jimmy and Gil witness a bandit drive away from a store he had robbed. Jimmy pursues the thief, and the police, through an error, pursue Jimmy and overtake him. He convinces the police that he had been chasing the bandit himself, and then helps them to corner the crook. Jimmy's father is proud of his son's accomplishment, and Gloria, once influenced by Tommy's hot rod, now has eyes only for Jimmy.

It was produced by Jerry Thomas and directed by Lewis D. Collins from an original screen play by Dan Ullman.

Good for family audiences. Young men and women in particular should enjoy it very much.

"He's a Cockeyed Wonder" with Mickey Rooney, Terry Moore and William Demarest

(Columbia, Oct.; time, 77 min.)

A moderately amusing program comedy that should get by with those who are ardent Mickey Rooney fans and who are not too exacting in their demands. Those who are the least bit discriminating probably will be bored with it, for the story is thin and inane, and the comedy, most of which is slapstick, is forced. As a not-too-bright young man who is always blundering into trouble, Rooney works hard to make something of his role, but he is handicapped by the weak material. William Demarest is amusing in one of his usual blustering characterizations, and Terry Moore is pert and pretty as the girl of Rooney's dreams. In the picture's favor is the fast action:—

Rooney, an orange sorter in an orange packing plant, is in love with Terry, but Demarest, her father, a foreman at the plant, wants her to marry Ross Ford, nephew of Charles Arnt, the plant's owner. Demarest feels differently towards Rooney when the young man inherits the "fortune" of his deceased uncle, a vaudeville magician, but he is not informed that the fortune turned out to be \$162 in cash and a truckload of magic equipment, which costs Rooney most of his inheritance for cartage. When Ned Glass, his uncle's agent, books him in an act to replace his uncle, Rooney arranges with Terry to steal her father's key to the warehouse so that they could use the premises to practice magic tricks that night for the act. At the warehouse, they interrupt a robbery by Douglas Fowley, Mike Mazurki and William Phillips who, with the cash from the safe, take Rooney and Terry along with them. Their disappearance, coupled with the fact that Terry had stolen her father's key to the warehouse, make the young couple robbery suspects. Fowley, attracted to Terry, plans to "bump off" Rooney to get him out of the way, but Rooney, through a series of blundering accidents, and with the help of a pet raven he had also inherited, gets word to the sheriff of their whereabouts and helps to capture the thieves. Rooney and Terry marry and go on tour with their magic act.

It was produced by Rudolph C. Flothow, and directed by Peter Godfrey, from an original screen play by John Henley. Children should enjoy it.

"SO YOU THINK YOU ARE INSURED"

Under the preceding heading, Mr. Ernest Watkins, a San Francisco insurance man, made an interesting speech at the recent Lake Tahoe convention of the Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners, of which Mr. Rotus Harvey is president.

Because Mr. Watkins presented to the exhibitors at the convention valuable information on insuring theatres, I am reproducing the salient parts of his speech:

"... I have traveled possibly forty thousand miles a year, talking to independent exhibitors all along the northern part of the state. Always, they are interested in knowing something about their insurance, but with a cautious, doubtful feeling that something is wrong—and usually there is.

"I don't know today how many of you gentlemen have insurance on your theatres or what type of insurance you have, but unless the equipment or building, or both, have been appraised by an independent appraiser, you are headed for trouble.

In the old days, many years ago, we insurance people would sit down with an assured and talk with him about the value of his building or the value of his equipment, and he would make the sale. He would decide how much his building was worth or how much his equipment was worth and we'd walk out with an order. And we'd take it down to our markets and we'd insure these properties. Then in many instances when a fire resulted—and I'm speaking specifically today about fire insurance—this individual assured was penalized on his loss.

"And then as time went on we recognized certain individuals representing insurance companies as being appraisers, and they would go out into the territory, or wherever they were sent, and would casually step off the square foot area of the building, multiply it by six dollars, or eight dollars, or seven dollars a square foot and come up with a value.

"But there are many problems that present themselves in our business in the underwriting of the risk that prohibit this type of appraisal to be made. First, all of you know that an insurance policy is a contract between the insurer and the insured, to do or not to do certain specific things.

"You perhaps have heard of co-insurance. To us people in the insurance business it has always been a difficult bug-a-boo to explain to the layman or to the insured. I hope that I can get over to you just what co-insurance is.

"Co-insurance means that the individual insured is willing to be co-insurer with the insurance company. You perhaps have heard of insuring 90% to value. That would mean that the insured was willing to carry or co-insure with the insurance company 10% of his loss. If the value of the building was \$100,000, he would therefore be willing to carry, or have the insurance company write for him, \$90,000 of insurance, and he would carry \$10,000 of insurance,—a remote possibility unless one anticipates a total loss in every instance. By so doing, the company, the insurance carrier, is willing to reduce the premium considerably. And so we use it a lot.

"But when we arrive at values there are three definite approaches. One is, the new replacement value of the building, which like insuring people we are not concerned with. The other is the present replacement value of the building which, for the purpose of applying co-insurance, is not to be considered.

"To be specific; if an individual owned a building whose present replacement value was \$100,000, an intelligent breakdown of the insurance on that building would be approximately \$70,000. First, we would deduct from the building the land values, and all underground plumbing, excavation, architect's fee, architect's plans (if those plans are available), and many other exclusions, concrete slabs laid on ground as applied to theatres, and all the time we

are reducing the \$100,000 to what we call net insurable value.

"Assuming that we had \$70,000 as a net insurable value on a building worth \$100,000, we then would agree to co-insure with the company 90% of \$70,000; or we would carry \$63,000 of insurance.

"As I say, co-insurance is very desirable because it enables the insured to buy his insurance at a greatly reduced rate per hundred, but likewise this co-insurance is an atomic bomb in the hands of an individual who uses it promiscuously. You can readily see that, if we are going to deduct from the building all these various exclusions or items, parts of the building that are not presumed to burn, it would be necessary for an insurance company to be furnished with a proper breakdown of the building costs.

"So today, instead of using the company man who steps off the square foot area for us, we are recommending every day that the insured buy and pay for, out of his own pocket, an appraisal, a comprehensive, broad breakdown of the building costs, made by an individual who is competent to do that work—an independent appraisal company.

"The insurance companies, gentlemen, recognize that there is no such thing as true values; values are opinions. My opinion may be very high, your opinion may be low, but they feel that an individual who is appraising buildings and equipment day in and day out, every day, all the time, all types of buildings, that individual is capable of giving to the insurance company at least a fair value of the building or the structure involved. And that's all they expect. That is truly all they expect.

"But if we don't have these building costs, it is possible that, in the event of a loss, particularly if your agent and yourself sit down and arrive at book values of the building, or arrive at some square foot area basis of the building, at the time of a loss, not only do you exclude intelligently, and thereby reduce your insurance, those items of the building that are definitely not insured in your contract, but you may even carry \$90,000 on this \$100,000 building, and find at the time of a loss your claim for damages is \$90,000 and you have still got 50% of your building standing.

"The company isn't going to pay you that \$90,000 if that be the case, because, when they reduce the premium with this co-insurance provision, they likewise penalize you if you are deficient to 90% to value at the time of the loss. So today we are recommending . . . to everyone with whom we come in contact, the desirability of having an independent appraisal company appraise these buildings.

"Likewise equipment in the theatre. If the theatre is burned down, you may have Simplex heads in there, or Motiograph heads or RCA heads. It doesn't make any difference, for the companies, if you are to have a satisfactory loss settlement, want to know the serial numbers of those pieces of equipment, when they were purchased, how much you paid for them, and they want to be able to determine the present value of that equipment, in the event of loss. So an independent appraiser not only counts the two by fours in this theatre and breaks down all the excavating cubic feet of concrete, all that sort of thing, and puts it into a nicely drawn binder for the benefit of the insurance company when necessary, but he counts the seats in the theatre and tells what kind of seats they are. If they are Heywood-Wakefield rocking chair loges, he tells what they are. . . .

"And, gentlemen, these are the things that the insurance companies want to know before they pay out their dough. And, those are exactly the same things that you would want to know if the tables were turned and you were paying out your dough. . . .

"Last year, in the State of California, assured were deprived of twenty-five million dollars of insurance. Twenty-five million dollars of their loss adjustments, that they should have received but they didn't, because they either didn't understand their contracts, or they ignored the co-insurance provisions of their contracts, or they didn't have appraisals."

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1950

No. 44

THE TOA MID-CENTURY CONVENTION

Samuel Pinanski, of Boston, was reelected as president of the Theatre Owners of America at the organization's mid-century convention, held this week at the Shamrock Hotel, in Houston, Texas.

Mitchell Wolfson, of Miami, was elected chairman of the board, succeeding Arthur Lockwood, of Boston.

The four-day meeting, probably the largest gathering of theatremen ever held, was highlighted by the "Products Day" sessions on Tuesday, during which the assembled delegates were addressed by top film company executives, including William F. Rodgers, Spyros P. Skouras, Al Lichtman, Andy W. Smith, Jr., Charles Einfeld, Robert Mochrie, David Lipton, Abe Montague, Steve Broidy and Robert L. Lippert.

Rodgers, MGM's vice-president in charge of sales, whose speech was along the lines of the one he delivered at the recent National Allied convention in Pittsburgh, reiterated the statements he had made there on the subject of competitive bidding to the effect that his company had not invited the procedure but was following it because it knows of no other method to satisfy competing exhibitors who are seeking the same positions as to product and its availability. He did, however, add the following statements of policy in his talk before the TOA:

"Insofar as the law permits, we intend to confine our future competitive bidding activities to theatres that are adequate to exhibit our product on the run desired.

"We are going to do our level best to administer this phase of our business intelligently, always bearing in mind that the law governing our business must be respected.

"As to divulging to the losing bidder the terms under which a picture was awarded after competitive bidding, we are agreeable hereafter to such a procedure, providing each and every one of the interested parties so indicates his willingness in writing at the time the bid is submitted."

By offering to reveal the terms of the successful bid to the losing bidders, Bill Rodgers has taken an important step forward to help remove one of the most vexatious exhibitor objections to competitive bidding as practiced in the motion picture industry. In view of the fact, however, that Rodgers' offer to disclose the terms of the winning bid hinges on "each and every one of the interested parties" agreeing to the disclosures, many competing exhibitors may not obtain the desired information because of the refusal of one of the interested parties, for reasons best known to himself, to have the terms of his bid disclosed.

In a further statement of policy, Rodgers castigated exhibitors who "short-change" the distributors on percentage engagements, stating that their cheating "can only result in harm to the reputation of the vast majority of honorable exhibitors." Warning that his company will continue to prosecute offenders, Rodgers said that, hereafter, MGM will no longer solicit business from exhibitors who have been caught falsifying their records to the company.

Spyros P. Skouras, president of 20th Century-Fox, devoted the major part of his effective address to ways and means of meeting competition from television, which he termed "our supreme problem today," the "toughest competition we have ever had to meet."

In addition to urging the exhibitors to devote themselves to greater showmanship efforts, Skouras told them that he personally believes, despite the misgivings of many of his friends, that the future of the motion picture theatres will be insured if the exhibitors have the courage to embrace theatre television.

He envisaged theatre television as offering the exhibitors

an opportunity to provide theatre entertainment of a quality never dreamt of before, through the production of special televised shows to be shown on the same program with a motion picture. "In simultaneous programs in hundreds or thousands of theatres," said Mr. Skouras, "you can bring to your audiences programs dwarfing anything we know, because your screens can present great artists of the motion pictures, of the theatre, the concert stage, and of radio. . . . Many times, together with a great motion picture, you can present such great hits as 'South Pacific' and 'Call Me Madam,' as well as operas."

Yet, in the face of this opportunity, Skouras stated, "we seem to be incredibly helpless" in that the industry is still without television channels. "Is it possible," he queried, "that we do not demand enough respect from an agency of our Government to protect our business, our investments, and to serve the public best? I believe that we have failed to persuade the FCC to license us with the channels we deserve because we are too inarticulate. Because we have not a common clear understanding of the value of this new medium for our theatres, and because we lack harmony and coordination."

Elsewhere in his talk Skouras recommended one or two charity collections a year in theatres for outstanding national charities; urged every one in the industry to avoid criticizing Hollywood and their fellow industryites, stating that "this self destructive criticism has done more to hurt us than all outside criticism"; and suggested a schedule of outstanding film festivals in ten or twelve important cities annually as a means of creating public interest in our business.

Referring to the avalanche of lawsuits that are being brought by exhibitors against the distributors, Skouras said: "It has come to pass that we are virtually damned if we do and damned if we don't. Obviously, we can't satisfy conflicting demands from exhibitors whom we believe are in competition for identical runs. If we use our best judgment and do what we think is right, we often get a lawsuit for trying."

"These suits have become so numerous and the amounts involved so vast," he added, "that if something constructive is not done by each branch of the industry, working in co-operation with each other branch, to solve this problem, there is not going to be anything left for any of us." Mr. Skouras made it clear that, in his opinion, competitive bidding is not a constructive policy.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Skouras urged the industry to unite to build up the interests of every producing company, distributor and exhibitor, so that all will prosper and succeed. "We must fight together," he declared. "None of us can survive if the industry does not survive."

Limited space does not permit more than a brief summary of the interesting talks made by the other speakers.

Al Lichtman, 20th Century-Fox vice-president, reviewed the rise of the motion picture to the greatest entertainment medium in the world but warned that the unequal competition of television, because it is free and convenient to the public, challenges the very existence of the industry. He voiced alarm that home television may reduce the industry to "only a business of hits," in which case, he said, we may become the "picayune business that the legitimate show business has been reduced to." He urged the exhibitors to realize the danger and expressed confidence that, through united efforts, the industry can overcome its problems and rise to even greater heights.

Andy W. Smith Jr., 20th Century-Fox vice-president in

(Continued on back page)

"Breakthrough" with David Brian, John Agar and Frank Lovejoy

(Warner Bros., Dec. 9; time, 91 min.)

"Breakthrough" is a hard-hitting, thrill-packed war melodrama, dealing with the World War II experiences of an American infantry company involved in the invasion of Europe from the D-Day landing on Omaha Beach to the capture of St. Lo. The picture is most effective in the battle scenes, which are made all the more realistic by the expert way in which authentic clips from both Allied and enemy combat films have been blended in with the staged action. The battle scenes are, in fact, so vivid in their depiction of modern warfare in all its harsh ugliness that they may prove to be much too grim for those who are squeamish. The weakest part of the picture is the story, which is episodic and somewhat contrived, and which is lacking in clear-cut characterizations and motivations. Despite the story's shortcomings, however, it is one of the better war pictures, but just how it may perform at the box-office is a question that the exhibitor must answer for himself since he is the best judge of whether or not his patrons are in the mood to accept a picture of this type nowadays.

Primarily, the story concerns itself with the friction between David Brian, the tough, battle-wise company commander, and John Agar, a sensitive second lieutenant, fresh from OCS. Chief cause of the animosity between them is Brian's apparent indifference to the tragedies that befall his men, and the abusive attitude he assumes in training Agar on tactical war problems. In due time, however, Agar becomes aware of Brian's deep concern for his men, despite his tough exterior, and eventually, when the rigors of battle turn Brian into a psychopathic case, a condition he recognizes himself when he is assigned to headquarters, he recommends Agar, who had proved his worth, as his successor with the company command. The story concerns itself also with the thoughts and reactions of the soldiers under battle conditions, and with their individual feats of daring and sacrifice as they battle foot by foot across France from one hedgerow to another to dislodge the Germans from the protection these hedgerows afforded them. Here and there some touches of humor are worked in between the melodramatic incidents. The supporting cast is good, with an outstanding job turned in by Frank Lovejoy, as a seasoned top sergeant, whose understanding guidance helps Agar over the rough spots. A brief but effective bit is contributed by Suzanne Dalbert, as a flirtatious French girl in a liberated Normandy village.

It was produced by Bryan Foy and directed by Lewis Seiler from a screenplay by Bernard Girard and Ted Sheredman, based on a story by Joseph I. Breen, Jr. Matt Willis, Greg McClure and Edward Norris are among the others in the cast. Adult fare.

"Undercover Girl" with Alexis Smith and Scott Brady

(Univ.-Int'l, November; time, 83 min.)

A fairly interesting "cops and robbers" melodrama. The story follows a conventional pattern in theme and treatment and, as indicated by the title, the heroine is a policewoman who poses as a shady character to worm her way into the crooks' confidence and ultimately bring them to justice. Although it offers little that is novel and moves rather slowly at times, it does generate enough excitement and suspense to satisfy the followers of this type of pictures. The characterizations are stereotyped, but the players adequately fill the roles assigned to them:—

Gerald Mohr, head of a West Coast narcotics gang, kills Regis Toomey, a New York detective, when he rejects a bribe. Scott Brady, a Los Angeles police lieutenant who had been trying to trap the gang, enlists the aid of Toomey's daughter, Alexis Smith, a rookie New York policewoman, who is granted leave to accompany Brady to the coast in an effort to find her father's killer. Under a plan worked out by Brady, Alexis assumes a fictitious identity and represents herself as a Chicago drug operator, a protege of Gladys George, a drug addict, whom the underworld erroneously believed to be dead. Through clever maneuvers she makes

contact with the gang and soon wins the confidence of Edmon Ryan, a shady doctor, whose private sanatorium was used as a front by Mohr. Ryan falls in love with Alexis and tells her of his grown son who knew nothing about his shady operations. On the day set for Alexis to buy a quantity of drugs from Mohr, she bumps into Richard Egan, a jilted New York boy-friend. The meeting is observed by Royal Dano, a gang member, who checks up on Egan and discovers Alexis' true identity. To keep this information from Mohr, Ryan, for his own safety, murders Dano. Alexis, now aware that she had been found out, persuades Ryan to turn state's evidence and go through with the deal to protect his son from scandal. At the appointed hour for the delivery of the narcotics, with the police all set to close in on the gang, Mohr cagily makes a switch in plans and takes Alexis to another hideaway in an abandoned house. There, as he turns over the drugs to Alexis, word comes of Dano's murder and the reason for it. Alexis bolts from the room and runs through the darkened house with Mohr in hot pursuit. Just then Brady and the police burst in and capture the gang, but Alexis herself gets the drop on Mohr, thus having the satisfaction of bringing her father's slayer to justice. It ends with Alexis and Brady finding themselves in love.

It was produced by Aubrey Schenck and directed by Joseph Pevney from a screenplay by Harry Essex, based on a story by Francis Rosenwald. Adult fare.

"Never a Dull Moment" with Irene Dunne and Fred MacMurray

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 89 min.)

Good mass entertainment. The family trade in particular should enjoy it, for it has the sure-fire ingredients of a highly amusing domestic comedy, with just the right touches of warmth and human interest. Revolving around a sophisticated woman songwriter who forsakes the luxuries of her New York life to marry a cowhand, a widower with two children, the story, though lightweight, keeps one laughing throughout. Most of the comedy, some of it slapstick, is provoked by her trials and tribulations as she bravely struggles to adjust herself to life on a rundown ranch, and by the invasion of her privacy by overfriendly neighbors. Irene Dunne, who is as beautiful as ever, and Fred MacMurray, are a perfect team for this type of comedy, and they make the most of their respective roles. Andy Devine, as a ranch hand, and William Demarest, as a grumpy ranch owner, contribute much to the comedy:—

MacMurray, appearing with Devine at a charity rodeo sponsored by Irene, falls in love with her when Devine arranges a meeting between them in her luxurious apartment. They marry after a whirlwind courtship and set out in his ancient touring car for his ranch in the Rockies. The ranch proves to be a rundown affair, dependent for water on Demarest, and MacMurray's two daughters (Natalie Wood and Gigi Perreau) greet Irene with considerable reserve. Determined to make a go of it, she struggles to make the place a real home and gradually wins the children's affections as she learns to cook, ride and rope a horse, and milk a cow. She even tricks Demarest into agreeing to furnish the additional water the ranch needs badly, only to antagonize him when she accidentally shoots his prize bull. In retaliation, he calls off the water deal and announces that he will take over the ranch in repayment. This turn of events leads to a quarrel between Irene and MacMurray and, to the consternation of the children, she decides to return to New York to resume her songwriting career. She is unable, however, to concentrate on her work because of her longing for MacMurray and the children. Meanwhile MacMurray, to salvage his own finances, had taken to the rodeo again, but he, too, is so disturbed emotionally that he meets with little success. Devine finally solves their problems by dragging MacMurray up to Irene's apartment where, after a joyous reunion, she agrees to accompany him West for keeps.

It was produced by Harriet Parsons and directed by George Marshall from a screen play by Lou Breslow and Doris Anderson, based on a novel by Kay Swift.

Very good family entertainment.

"Mrs. O'Malley and Mr. Malone" with James Whitmore and Marjorie Main

(MGM, December; time, 69 min.)

A good program murder mystery melodrama, with the accent on comedy. The fact that the story is a hodgepodge of nonsense does not matter much, for the action is fast, the dialogue breezy, and the situations, although far-fetched, quite comical. A major part of the action takes place on a train, and most of the laughter is provoked by the mixups that occur when Marjorie Main and James Whitmore become innocently involved in two murders and are compelled to keep switching the bodies from one compartment to another lest they be charged with the crimes. Normally, situations that deal with murders and with dead bodies are distasteful, but not so in this film because it is all treated in a comedy vein. The direction is good, and the performances sprightly:—

Principal characters in the "screwball" story are Marjorie Main, a forthright middle-aged backwoods widow, who had just won a \$50,000 radio quiz program and a trip to New York; James Whitmore, a completely unethical criminal attorney, a raffish young man who had an eye for the ladies and who spent more money than he earned; Douglas Fowley, an ex-convict, from whom Whitmore sought to collect \$10,000 for securing his parole; Fred Clark, a Chicago detective, who was searching for \$100,000 stolen by Fowley and never recovered; Ann Dvorak, Fowley's ex-wife, who wanted her back alimony; Don Porter, Fowley's former partner, who wanted his cut of the stolen money; and Dorothy Malone, Porter's girl-friend, a designing blonde. All find themselves on a train bound for New York when Fowley, who had disappeared, had been seen buying a railroad ticket for the big city. Marjorie and Whitmore, finding themselves in adjoining compartments, soon strike up a friendship. Unknown to all, Dorothy, doublecrossing Porter, was traveling with Fowley, who had escaped detection by wearing a sailor's uniform. The excitement starts when Fowley and Dorothy are murdered mysteriously and their bodies placed in Marjorie's compartment. Marjorie and Whitmore have a hectic time switching the bodies from one compartment to another each time Clark drops in for a chat, but he eventually catches them with the bodies as well as the \$100,000 and places them under arrest for the murders. By the time they arrive in New York, Whitmore deduces that Porter is the murderer and spots him as he tries to make a getaway disguised as a sailor. Although still handcuffed to Marjorie, Whitmore breaks away from Clark and, after a wild chase through the crowded station, pursued by police and followed by a welcoming band for Marjorie, corners Porter. When Porter starts to confess, Whitmore stops him and offers to defend him for a fee.

It was produced by William H. Wright and directed by Norman Taurog from a screenplay by William Bowers, based on a story by Craig Rice and Stuart Palmer.

Best suited for mature audiences.

"The Sun Sets at Dawn" with Sally Parr and Philip Shawn

(Eagle-Lion, November; time, 72 min.)

A cheerless slow-moving melodrama, revolving around the eleventh hour reprieve of an innocent young man awaiting electrocution for a murder. It is a dreary, depressing yarn and, although a certain amount of suspense is maintained because a faulty electric chair conveniently delays the execution, its plot development is unconvincing and its slow and mechanical unraveling adds up to a generally listless dramatic show. Moreover, its lack of players who mean anything at the box-office will mitigate against its being used as more than a supporting feature in secondary theatres. The direction and acting are no more than adequate, and the production values modest:—

The story takes place on the day set for the electrocution of Philip Shawn for the murder of a political boss. Although the young man protests his innocence, the only ones who believe him are Walter Reed, the prison priest, Sally Parr, his sweetheart, and Howard St. John, the Warden. A group

of reporters, waiting to cover the execution, discuss the case at a combination diner and post office nearby the prison, and all agree that the only person who ever committed a killing in like fashion was Lee Fredericks, a gangster presumed to be dead at the time the politician was murdered. Taken to the prison to witness the execution, the reporters are shocked when Shawn, strapped to the chair, is miraculously spared through a fault in the mechanism. Meanwhile a stranger stops off at the diner, where a trusty, sent there to pick up the prison mail, recognizes him as Fredericks, even though his facial features had been changed by plastic surgery. The trusty, to settle an old score, exposes the gangster, who is taken into custody after a furious gun battle. Confronted by the warden, Frederick admits his identity and, out of sympathy for the distraught Sally, confesses that he had killed the politician, who had been blackmailing him. His confession comes just as Shawn is being strapped to the chair for a second time. Thinking fast, the warden pulls the main switch, saving Shawn's life in the nick of time.

The story was written and directed by Paul H. Sloane, who co-produced it with Helen H. Rathvon. Adult fare.

"Three Husbands" with Emlyn Williams, Eve Arden and Howard da Silva

(United Artists, Nov. 17; time, 78 min.)

A pretty good program sex comedy, best suited for the sophisticated trade. Similar to "A Letter to Three Wives" in reverse, the story deals with the consternation that is caused among three sets of married couples when a deceased mutual friend, a playboy bachelor, prankishly leaves a note to each husband, making him believe that he had had an affair with his wife. Although the picture is by no means as good as "A Letter to Three Wives," it does have some very good comedy situations and bright dialogue. The strife that is stirred up among the couples is cause for considerable laughter, particularly when the husbands, through flashbacks, review past incidents that give them reason to believe that their wives had been unfaithful. The direction is competent, the acting zestful, and the production values good:—

The day after the sudden death of Emlyn Williams, a wealthy British bachelor living in San Francisco, Jonathan Hale, his attorney, gives to Shepperd Strudwick, Robert Karnes and Howard da Silva, Williams' three best friends, letters informing them that he had carried on an affair with each of their wives. Strudwick and Karnes react to the shocking news with indignation and determine to seek divorces, but da Silva, a rough and ready sporting type of fellow, regards the letter as a monumental jest. But as the three men review past associations of themselves and their wives with the gay Williams, each finds reason to believe that his wife had been unfaithful. Strudwick, married to Ruth Warrick, believes that the affair started while he himself was carrying on romantically with Louise Erickson, a voluptuous artist, and Williams was presumably accompanying Ruth to musicals; nevertheless he calls her a Jezebel. Karnes, married to Vanessa Brown, a Nurse, practically puts her out of their home when he recalls her aid to Williams during his illness and suspects that she had been visiting him secretly while presumably on other cases. Da Silva, goaded by Eve Arden, his wife, into thinking that Williams did have a romantic attachment for her, recollects numerous gay incidents that seem to bear out her remarks. On the following day, Williams' attorney summons the three couples to his office for a reading of the will, at which time Williams enjoys his last posthumous jest by dividing his estate among the three girls. But a final disclosure in the tongue-in-cheek document reveals that his "affairs" with the wives had been a gag to stimulate in the husbands a re-examination of their attitudes toward their wives. Each goes crawling back to his wife and is forgiven.

It was produced by I. G. Goldsmith and directed by Irving Reis from a story by Vera Caspary, who wrote the screen play in collaboration with Edward Eliscu. The cast includes Billie Burke, James Darwell and others.

Adult fare.

charge of sales, listed five contributions that his company can make to the welfare of the exhibitors. These included (1) The release of 36 "A" pictures in 1951, an increase of eleven pictures over the 1949-50 average; (2) the sale of a full season's product to small exhibitors in outlying areas, along the lines of the plan he outlined at the recent National Allied convention; (3) the refusal to negotiate for "drive-in first run" in any community for the protection of the regular first-runs, but, in cases where the company is "forced" to give drive-in an earlier clearance, it will consent, where the situations warrant, to permit drive-ins to compete or buy on the same availability as the first neighborhood run; (4) minimizing competitive bidding, permitting it only where a request is made by either an independent or a circuit; (5) support of any workable industry arbitration system that will be embraced by all the distributors and exhibitors. (Bill Rodgers, too, urged the formulation of an industry arbitration plan.)

Charles Einfeld, 20th Century-Fox vice-president in charge of advertising and publicity, indirectly took the exhibitors to task for failing to support properly with their local advertising the advertising that is done on a national scale by the distributors. He cited as examples the methods followed by manufacturers and dealers in other industries, with particular emphasis on the funds contributed by the dealers, to show that by comparison the exhibitors, the "dealers" in the motion picture industry, are not doing as good a job in selling locally their industry and its products. Einfeld suggested that the exhibitors, like dealers in other industries, "band together and invest in community public relations to protect your own interests."

David Lipton, Universal-International's national director of advertising and publicity, urged collective advertising on a national scale of outstanding films from all sources, with the cost of the program shared by the producers and distributors. He cautioned, however, that such an advertising campaign would be doomed to failure if any of the participating companies insisted upon including films of doubtful value.

Robert Mochrie, RKO's general sales manager, outlined his company's forthcoming product and urged the exhibitors to carry on more extensive advertising and exploitation to obtain maximum grosses.

Abe Montague, Columbia's general sales manager, urged the exhibitors to shake themselves free from their fears over television, and pointed to the expanded production plans of his own company as proof of its confidence in the future of the industry.

Steve Broidy, Monogram president, and Robert L. Lippert, head of the company bearing his name, left no doubt about the confidence that they have in the industry's future. Both reviewed their product line-ups in glowing terms.

Broidy, incidentally, won a rousing round of applause from the delegates when he stated that his company will stick to family-type pictures and shy away from psychological pictures because "we get so confused ourselves that we don't know what we are making."

"Holiday Rhythm" with Mary Beth Hughes, David Street and Wally Vernon

(Lippert, October 13; time, 60 and 70 min.)

Produced as a follow-up to "Hollywood Varieties," this is a good picture of its kind, suitable for a double bill. It is really a collection of specialty acts, featuring different well-known performers. Being a novelty, it should be accepted well by the movie-goers, most of whom would not have an opportunity to see these performers in the flesh. The music is mostly good and the photography is clear. The producer is offering the picture in two versions, one sixty minutes long, and the other seventy, for theatres in single feature situations:—

Mary Beth Hughes and David Street are trying to sell their television show to Donald McBride, hypochondriac president of an airline company, who is accompanied by Wally Vernon, his "Yes!" man. While the TV program director is discussing with McBride other show possibilities, David slips and knocks himself unconscious. While in that state, he dreams about a trip around the world, during which he and Mary witness a series of events. In Ireland, they are entertained by Glenn Turnbull, a dancer. On a visit to a Parisian cabaret, they see an apache dance number with

Vera Lee and Tom Ladd, Bertil and Gustaf Unger, boy twins, and Eva and Neva Martell, girl twins, to the accompaniment of Nappy LaMare and his Dixieland Band. In Holland, they watch George Arnold and his "Rhythm on Ice" show. In London, they watch Tom Noonan, a screwball doctor, and Peter Marshall, his looney assistant, perform an operation on Wally Vernon. Later, they watch Bill Burns and his Birds present a feathered frolic, followed by Gloria Grey, Tex Ritter and The Cass County Boys in a few rounds of Western music. In the Pacific Islands, they see Moana, a Hawaiian singer, Freddie Letuli, a sword dancer, and Regina Day, a drum dancer. After Bobby Chang, a Chinese juggler, goes through his paces for them, they join a group of interplanetary explorers on a trip into space. In South America, Chuy Reyes and his Mambo Orchestra present a finale to their journey. David regains consciousness to the strains of music made by Ike Carpenter and his Orchestra. When McBride tells them that he liked their show and that he will contract for it, Mary and David go into a happy embrace.

It was produced by Jack Leewood and directed by Jack Scholl from an original screenplay by Lee Wainer.

Suitable for the entire family.

"Rio Grande" with John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara

(Republic, Nov. 15; time, 105 min.)

Reverting once again to his favorite theme in recent years—the U.S. Cavalry versus Apache Indians in the post-Civil War era, John Ford has fashioned another big-scale outdoor melodrama that draws comparison with his "Fort Apache" and "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon," although it does not match the entertainment quality of either of these pictures. It seems unlikely that its box-office performance will be less than good, first, because it offers the kind of thrilling action one expects to find in a picture of this type, and secondly, because of the potent marquee value of the leading players' names as well as of the supporting cast, which includes Chill Wills, Victor McLaglen, J. Carrol Naish and Claude Jarman, Jr. Critical patrons, however, will find it no more than fairly entertaining, for the story is familiar, somewhat hazy and excessively overlong, and its dramatic content is never as persuasive as it tries to be. Moreover, the characterizations are stereotyped and not clearly defined. The avid action fans will do doubt find it to their liking for, despite some draggy moments, it has an adequate share of fist fights, mounted pursuits and Indian fighting:—

John Wayne, colonel in command at Fort Starke, is taken by surprise when Claude Jarman, Jr., his son, whom he had not seen in fifteen years, is assigned to his command as an ordinary trooper. Years previously, as an officer in the Union Army, Wayne had sacrificed his marriage to military duty by burning the buildings on the family plantation of Maureen O'Hara, his Southern-born wife, who refused to forgive him. Wayne, a strict militarist, makes it clear to his son that he will not be given favored treatment because of their relationship. The proud lad, in turn, informs him that he expects no favors. To Wayne's secret satisfaction, the boy proves his mettle as a trooper. He becomes close buddies with troopers Ben Johnson and Harry Carey, Jr., and a fatherly interest is taken in his welfare by Victor McLaglen, a blustering sergeant, and Chill Wills, the fort's doctor. Wayne's emotions are stirred by the arrival of Maureen, who was determined to obtain her son's discharge from the army. Both Wayne and the boy, however, hold out against her wishes. Meanwhile Wayne is plagued by savage attacks by the Apaches, who escape across the border and hole up in a remote Mexican village, thus leaving him helpless because of strict military orders not to cross the Rio Grande into Mexico. A fresh attack by the Apaches, in which a group of children are kidnapped, leads J. Carrol Naish, the general, to give Wayne informal permission to cross the border. In a rousing fight highlighted by the heroism of Claude and his buddies, Wayne's troops defeat the Apaches and rescue the children. As their son is cited for bravery, Wayne and Maureen effect a reconciliation.

It is an Argosy production, directed by John Ford, who co-produced it with Merian C. Cooper. The screen play was written by James Kevin McGuinness, based on a Saturday Evening Post story by James Warner Bellah. The cast includes Grant Withers, the Sons of the Pioneers and others.

Suitable for the family.

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COMPO'S SURVIVAL AT STAKE

Having survived one serious crisis in its brief history only three months ago, the Council of Motion Picture Organizations once again finds its future in doubt as a result of new demands on the part of the Theatre Owners of America.

This time TOA, through an action taken by its board of directors on the final day of the organization's annual convention held last week in Houston, is demanding larger representation on COMPO's executive board before it will approve continued membership in COMPO.

Under the present set-up, COMPO's executive board is comprised of two delegates from each of COMPO's ten charter member organizations, with both delegates entitled to only one vote as a unit. TOA is dissatisfied with this set-up, claiming that it is entitled to "fairer representation" on the board in proportion to the number of theatres it represents, the importance of these theatres, the number of states in which it has regional units, and the huge percentage of dues its members will pay for the support of COMPO.

As an example of what it considers to be inadequate representation, TOA points out that its regional units in twenty-two states west of the Mississippi have no official spokesmen on the COMPO executive board, and that these states are now represented by two delegates from the Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners, which has no affiliation with TOA. Fairer representation on COMPO's board would correct this condition, according to TOA.

Under a resolution adopted by TOA's board of directors, Sam Pinanski, the organization's president, appointed a committee "to meet with representatives of COMPO seeking to have COMPO reorganize itself along the lines of fairer representation and limiting its activities to public relations at the national level, with the end in mind of said TOA committee reporting back to the board of TOA for final approval."

This committee includes Ted Gamble, as chairman, Charles Skouras, Robert J. O'Donnell, Mitchell Wolfson, Sherrill Corwin, E. D. Martin, Tom Edwards, Max Connet, Si Fabian, Arthur Lockwood, Robert Wilby, Gael Sullivan and Mr. Pinanski. Presumably, this committee is to meet with COMPO officials prior to the scheduled COMPO executive board meeting on November 16-17.

Ned E. Depinet, COMPO's president, in his speech at the TOA convention, told the delegates that the problem of greater western representation will be considered at the forthcoming executive board meeting.

That the other constituent organizations in COMPO will resist any move that tends to give the TOA a dominating voice in COMPO matters soon became apparent this week when Abram F. Myers, National Allied's general counsel and chairman of the board, commenting on the TOA action, had this to say, as quoted in *Motion Picture Daily*:

"Unquestionably, the regional representation idea is to give TOA more influence. You can be sure Allied will be against any proposal to upset the present balance or give TOA or any of its people domination in COMPO."

Stating that Allied will veto any reorganization plan that gives TOA increased influence, Myers said that Allied's board of directors had ratified participation in COMPO only on the basis of the present organizational set-up, and that any change in that set-up would have to be approved by the Allied board. "I do not believe," he added, "that the board for one minute would participate in any organization where TOA is given greater influence than anyone else, merely to

appease it. Allied is interested in a public relations project where all interests have an equal voice and which functions by unanimous consent. We are against any appeasement of dissident elements by granting special favors."

As to TOA's claim that its western regional units are without representation on the COMPO board, Myers said: "TOA can send its directors from the West as well as the East. It can name Charles Skouras instead of Sam Pinanski or Gael Sullivan if it is so worried about the West Coast being represented. But tearing the structure of COMPO apart to take care of something like that can lead only to disaster."

Commenting still further on the matter, Myers, in an apparent reference to reports that the COMPO high command is willing to work out an agreement with TOA to keep it in the COMPO fold, is quoted as saying that the Allied leaders are "good and tired of the way COMPO insists on playing politics all the time—the reaction is very strong."

Whether or not a compromise can be reached with TOA is a matter of conjecture. It is known that, like the Allied leaders, some of the leaders of the other constituent groups in COMPO are annoyed over the constant TOA objections, which have served to impede COMPO's progress. Moreover, there is need for further clarification of TOA's demands. For example, if TOA's demand for "fairer representation" entails no more than an expansion of COMPO's executive board so that a larger number of TOA leaders can give expression to their views, the other charter organizations, except Allied, of course, may be willing to go along with the plan even to the point of accepting smaller representation on the executive board themselves. Allied, no doubt, will accept nothing less than equal representation with TOA. If, however, TOA's demand for "fairer representation" includes also a provision for greater voting power—that is, if it wants more than the one vote that is now allotted to each constituent group, the demand will unquestionably be rejected, not only by Allied, but also by most if not all the other groups.

Pending further clarification of just what TOA's demands entail, no fair-thinking person can disagree with the views expressed by Mr. Myers. After all, no exhibitor leader with a proper regard for his responsibility would expose his organization to the control of any other group.

As a result of this latest TOA demand, many industryites now look upon the future of COMPO with misgivings. This is most unfortunate, for if ever there was a time in the history of the motion picture industry when unified action was needed, that time is the present. Improved public relations, unfair legislation and discriminatory taxation, competition from television, declining box-office receipts, industry participation in the defense effort—these and many other problems that affect the industry as a whole await solution. And the only organization that can accomplish the most in dealing with these problems is COMPO, for it provides the means by which all elements of the industry can get together in harmony to exchange views and work our programs that will have each and every one of us fighting shoulder to shoulder to protect and safeguard the business.

The industry cannot afford to let COMPO fall by the wayside. Too much is at stake. It is to be hoped that at the forthcoming COMPO executive board meeting, when consideration will be given to TOA's demand for reorganization, cool heads will prevail, and that there will be a demonstration of sincerity on the part of all concerned to keep COMPO alive in the interest of unity.

"Kansas Raiders" with Audie Murphy, Brian Donlevy and Marguerite Chapman

(Univ.-Int'l, November; time, 80 min.)

This western-type Technicolor melodrama, which depicts Jesse James and several other famous outlaws in their younger days as members of the infamous Quantrill raiders, has all the excitement that one expects to find in a picture of this kind, but it is unpleasant. Not only is the action ruthless and excessively brutal, but the story is demoralizing in that it attempts to win sympathy for murderous characters. Moreover, it is ethically unsound, for at the finish the desperadoes, although deserving of punishment for their misdeeds, ride off into the hills scot-free. Aside from these shortcomings, the story is unconvincing, and the characterizations confusing, for their motivations are never made quite clear. The acting is adequate, in spite of the fact that the script is below par.

The story casts Audie Murphy, as Jesse James; Richard Long, as Frank James; Anthony Curtis, as Kit Dalton; and James Best and Dewey Martin, as the Younger Brothers. Led by Murphy, the five men, all under twenty-one, ride into Kansas to join up with Brian Donlevy (as Quantrill), leader of a guerrilla band that was looting and burning Union towns in the name of the Confederacy. When the boys meet Donlevy, they make it clear that they were out to avenge themselves on Union soldiers who had burned their farms and had murdered unarmed relatives. Donlevy tests Murphy's courage by having one of his tough aides pick a fight with the youngster. Murphy stabs the man to death. Impressed by the lad's fighting ability, Donlevy makes him a top aide. Marguerite Chapman, Donlevy's mistress, takes a liking to Murphy and warns him that Donlevy is nothing more than a blood-thirsty murderer seeking personal profit and power. Murphy realizes the truth of these words on his first raid, when the raiders swoop down on a farm settlement, killing unarmed men and looting and burning the buildings. The sight of the wanton destruction is revolting to Murphy and, under Martha's prodding, he decides to quit, but he soon comes under the spell of Donlevy's magnetism and stays on, despite his abhorance of the continued wanton killings. Eventually, both the Union and Confederate military leaders brand Donlevy as an outlaw, and his raiders are compelled to split up to evade capture. Donlevy, wounded in a clash with Union soldiers, is taken to a hideout by Murphy and his group, but the soldiers, headed by Richard Arlen, soon find the hideout and surround it. At the finish, Donlevy sacrifices his life in a suicidal dash from the hideout, thus drawing the soldiers' fire in a way that permits Murphy and the others to escape.

It was produced by Ted Richmond and directed by Ray Enright from a story and screen play by Robert L. Richards.

Adult fare.

"Paper Gallows" with an all-British cast

(Eagle-Lion, September; time, 68 min.)

A mediocre British-made murder melodrama; it will probably have tough sledding in this country even as the lower half of a double bill. The story is a grim, moody affair that unfolds in an obvious manner and, even though it does have a few thrills and several suspenseful moments, the acting is so unrestrained that one loses interest in the proceedings. Not much can be said for the direction, which is amateurish, nor for the production values, which are extremely modest. Moreover, the English accents of the players are so thick at times that one has difficulty understanding the dialogue:—

John Bentley and Dermot Walsh, brothers and authors of crime stories, share a large country home with Rona Anderson, their pretty secretary. Rona loves Bentley, a clean-cut chap, arousing the jealousy of Walsh, a moody, neurotic fellow. Walsh, determined to write a classic murder thriller, goes to great lengths to obtain authentic color, even to the point of murdering an ex-convict, a friend who had come to call on the brothers. The man's failure to keep his

appointment causes Bentley to suspect his brother of foul play, but Walsh shrewdly attempts to make it appear as if the missing man was still alive. Bentley, however, continues to search for the body. An intense hatred grows up between the brothers, and Rona herself soon finds reason to suspect and fear Walsh. Learning that Bentley had come across a clue that was sure to reveal him as the murderer, Walsh starts dictating his new novel to Rona. She soon becomes aware of the fact that the story was, in reality, an account of how he had committed the murder and of the manner in which he had covered up the crime. For the final chapter to the novel, he forces Rona into a storage room and prepares to hang her from a rafter, but the attempt is thwarted by the timely arrival of Bentley. Walsh, by this time a total nervous wreck, meekly awaits the police.

John Guillermin wrote the screen play, directed it, and co-produced it with Robert Jordan Hill.

Adult fare.

"Mad Wednesday" with Harold Lloyd

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 77 min.)

(Editor's Note: The following review was originally published in the February 22, 1947 issue, under the title, "The Sin of Harold Diddlebock." Originally set for release through United Artists, the picture was held back and is now ready for release through RKO. Twelve minutes have been cut from its original running time of 89 minutes. The review is being reproduced for the guidance of this paper's subscribers.)

A highly amusing slapstick comedy, with many uproarious laugh-creating situations throughout. The film marks the return of Harold Lloyd to the screen, and a welcome one it is, for his brand of comedy is as effective as ever. The story, which was written, produced, and directed by Preston Sturges, has many novel and original touches, centering around Lloyd's transformation, as a result of his first drink, from a timid, middle-aged bookkeeper to a brazen, uninhibited playboy, who paints the town red, wins a fortune gambling on the horses, and wakes up from his drunken orgy to find that he had invested his winnings in a circus that was on the verge of bankruptcy. The most hilarious sequences have to do with his efforts to sell to uninterested bankers in Wall Street the idea of sponsoring a free circus for children in order to win friends. Meeting with rebuffs, he decides to make the bankers listen to him by calling on them with a tame lion in tow. The commotion he causes in the financial district will have your patrons literally rolling in the aisles, particularly the sequence in which the lion breaks loose, crawls onto a fire escape, and from there onto a narrow parapet many stories above the street. Lloyd's efforts to get the lion back into the building, and his slipping off the ledge and dangling in mid-air from the lion's leash, is all-out slapstick in the "Safety Last" manner, but it is extremely well done and should provoke riotous laughter.

The start of the picture is novel in that it opens with an actual sequence from Lloyd's "The Freshman," which he produced in 1925. This sequence is the one in which Lloyd, as a water boy on the football team, is permitted to enter the game only because injuries to the team left no other player available. How he wins the game through a series of mistakes is just as comical now as it was then, and it should make one laugh to his heart's content. The present story dovetails with the old one by showing Lloyd being acclaimed as a hero in the dressing room, where Raymond Walburn, an alumnus, offers him a job in his advertising agency. He starts work at the bottom and, twenty-two years later, we find him doing the same perfunctory work, tired and resigned to his menial job. It is not until he is fired for being too old that he meets up with Jimmy Conlin, a racetrack tout, who talks him into having his first drink, which in turn sets him off on his wild spree. Conlin, incidentally, does an outstanding comedy job. Others in the cast include Rudy Vallee, Edgar Kennedy, Arline Judge, Franklin Pangborn, Lionel Stander, and Frances Ramsden, a charming newcomer, with whom Lloyd finds romance.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Prelude to Fame" with an all-British cast*(Univ.-Int'l, November; time, 78 min.)*

This British-made drama should go over fairly well with music lovers and class audiences who patronize the art theatres. Centering around an eight-year-old Italian boy who is discovered to have an extraordinary instinct for orchestration, and around a socially ambitious woman who exploits the child selfishly, the story, by virtue of sensitive direction and convincing acting, is interesting and has considerable emotional appeal. Jeremy Spenser, as the child prodigy, is a remarkably fine little actor, and the music lovers in particular will be thrilled by the expert manner in which he handles the baton as he conducts the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra through the movements of a series of classical numbers. The action takes place in England and Italy, and the production values are of a high quality:—

While vacationing in Italy with his wife and young son, Guy Rolfe, a famous English philosopher and amateur musician, discovers that Jeremy, youngest member of a poor neighboring Italian family, has a phenomenal appreciation of fine music. Rolfe, a kindly man, encourages the boy, and his ability comes to the attention of Kathleen Byron, a wealthy but childless neighbor, who dominated Henry Oscar, her congenial husband. She talks Jeremy's parents into letting her educate him musically and arranges for the boy to be tutored by a famous music professor. The youngster is put through an intensive period of training and, within a few months, Miss Byron arranges for his debut as a conductor. The child becomes phenomenally successful and is taken on a grand tour of Europe. Miss Byron, enraptured by the acclaim given her for her "discovery" of the boy, prepares to take him to America, breaking a promise to take him home first. She sees to it that the child is denied all contact with his family and friends and, by withholding his mail, leads him to believe that they had forsaken him. He becomes extremely unhappy and attempts to commit suicide, a tragedy that is averted by the timely arrival of Rolfe, who had learned of the child's unhappiness. Aided by Miss Byron's husband, who was sympathetic to the boy, Rolfe discovers the undelivered letters and enlists his help in voiding adoption papers prepared by his wife, and in sending the lad back to his family. Furious when she discovers that the boy had returned to Italy, Miss Byron denounces her husband for having wrecked her ambition to have a child to replace the one she never could have. He accepts her abuse, pleased in the thought that the boy had returned happily to his home.

It is a Two Cities film, produced by Donald B. Wilson and directed by Fergus McDonel from a screen play by Robert Westerby, based on the story, "Young Archimedes," by Aldous Huxley. Unobjectionable morally.

"American Guerrilla in the Philippines" with Tyrone Power and Micheline Puelle*(20th Century-Fox, December; time, 105 min.)*

Photographed in Technicolor, this war drama is not without its shortcomings, but on the whole it shapes up as a good picture of its kind. The story, which is based on the factual novel by Ira Wolfert, is an exciting account of the adventures of a naval officer stranded in the Philippines during World War II, after that country fell to the Japanese in 1942. The picture's shortcomings lie in the episodic story and in the romantic interest, which seems to have been dragged in by the ear; nevertheless, it grips one's interest throughout, for in addition to the thrilling action brought about by guerrilla warfare against the Japs, the picture has a realistic quality owing to the fact that it was made on location in the Philippines, and that the cast, except for the principals, is composed entirely of native Filipinos. Tyrone Power is rugged as the gallant hero of the piece, and Micheline Puelle aptly portrays the wife of a planter who is executed by the Japs, thus clearing the way for the romantic attachment between Power and herself. A most interesting sequence features a novel dance by a talented Filipino couple who step in and out of two bamboo poles that are struck together rhythmically by two natives; it is

one of the most fascinating dance numbers ever screened.

Power, an Ensign in the Navy, is one of eight survivors of a torpedo boat sunk by Jap planes. Learning that Bataan had fallen, Power, accompanied by Tom Ewell, sets out for an airfield on Mindanao, some 200 miles away, hoping to get a plane ride to Australia to rejoin his unit. They hack their way through jungles and, after several weeks, finally reach a town on the Island of Leyte, where they learn from the commander of the American outpost that their journey had been in vain, and that he himself had been instructed to surrender within 24 hours. Through the commander, Power promotes a native sailboat and hastily recruits a volunteer crew for the journey to Australia. Meanwhile he strikes up a friendship with Micheline by using his influence to obtain medical aid for one of her relatives. She tries to dissuade him from attempting the journey to Australia because of dangerous monsoons, but he ignores her advice. Just as she had warned, however, the craft capsizes eight miles from shore in a tropical storm. All manage to swim to shore and are given aid by Filipino patriots, who cleverly keeps the Japs from learning of their whereabouts. In the many months that follow, Power and his tattered followers hide in the jungle and successfully evade one Jap patrol after another. They meet Juan Torenna, Micheline's husband, an underground leader, who offers to help them get to Australia. Torenna introduces Power to a guerrilla general, who offers him a vessel on condition that he deliver a message to an American colonel on the Island of Mindanao who was attempting to unify all guerrilla activities against the Japs. Power delivers the message at great risk to his life and, when the colonel informs him of General MacArthur's desire to establish a spy service, he gives up the projected trip to Australia to take charge of radio operations on Leyte. After much difficulty he manages to establish radio contact with Army headquarters, but enemy harassment forces him to change the base of his operations frequently. Meanwhile he has several reunions with Micheline, now widowed. Power's efforts are instrumental in helping American submarines to deliver supplies and, after more clashes with the Jap patrols, he and Micheline join the Filipino patriots in welcoming MacArthur (played by Robert Barrat) and a new fighting force back to the Philippines.

Lamar Trotter wrote the screen play and produced it. Fritz Lang directed it. Suitable for the family.

BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES*(Continued on inside page)*

"Peggy": Fair
 "Abbott & Costello in the Foreign Legion": Good-Fair
 "The Desert Hawk": Fair
 "Louisa": Good
 "Saddle Tramp": Good-Fair
 "Shakedown": Fair
 "The Sleeping City": Good-Fair

Eighteen pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 11.

Warner Bros.

"Young Man with a Horn": Good
 "Perfect Strangers": Good-Fair
 "Barricade": Fair
 "Stage Fright": Good-Fair
 "Daughter of Rosie O'Grady": Good
 "The Damned Don't Cry": Fair
 "Colt .45": Good-Fair
 "Caged": Good
 "This Side of the Law": Fair
 "Return of the Frontiersman": Fair
 "Bright Leaf": Fair
 "The Great Jewel Robbery": Fair
 "The Flame and the Arrow": Very Good
 "50 Years Before Your Eyes": Poor
 "Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye": Good-Fair
 "Tea for Two": Good-Fair
 "Pretty Baby": Fair
 "The Breaking Point": Fair

Eighteen pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 5; Fair, 8; Poor, 1.

BOX-OFFICE PERFORMANCES

The previous box-office performances were published in the issues of March 4 and March 25, 1950:

Columbia

"The Palomino": Fair-Poor
 "Blondie's Hero": Fair-Poor
 "Bodyhold": Fair
 "A Woman of Distinction": Fair
 "Cargo to Capetown": Fair
 "Tyrant of the Sea": Fair-Poor
 "Military Academy": Fair-Poor
 "Kill the Umpire": Good-Fair
 "No Sad Songs for Me": Fair-Poor
 "Beauty on Parade": Fair
 "Customs Agent": Fair
 "The Good Humor Man": Fair
 "Fortunes of Captain Blood": Fair
 "State Penitentiary": Fair-Poor
 "Rogues of Sherwood Forest": Fair
 "711 Ocean Drive": Good-Fair
 "Captive Girl": Fair-Poor
 "David Harding, Counterspy": Fair
 "In a Lonely Place": Poor
 "On the Isle of Samoa": Fair-Poor
 "Beware of Blondie": Fair-Poor
 "Fuller Brush Girl": Fair
 "Convicted": Fair
 "The Petty Girl": Fair

Twenty-four pictures have been checked with the following results: Good, 2; Fair, 12; Fair-Poor, 10.

Eagle-Lion

"The Great Rupert": Fair
 "The Golden Gloves": Fair-Poor
 "The Boy from Indiana": Fair
 "The Fighting Stallion": Fair-Poor
 "Forbidden Jungle": Poor
 "Kill or be Killed": Fair-Poor
 "The Jackie Robinson Story": Good-Fair
 "Timber Fury": Poor
 "It's a Small World": Fair-Poor
 "Death of a Dream": Poor
 "Federal Man": Fair-Poor
 "Destination Moon": Good-Fair
 "Eye Witness": Fair
 "High Lonesome": Fair
 "I Killed Geronimo": Fair

Fifteen pictures have been checked with the following results: Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 3.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"Nancy Goes to Rio": Good
 "Black Hand": Fair
 "Conspirator": Fair-Poor
 "The Yellow Cab Man": Good-Fair
 "Side Street": Good-Fair
 "The Outriders": Fair
 "The Reformer and the Redhead": Good
 "Please Believe Me": Fair
 "Shadow on the Wall": Fair
 "The Big Hangover": Fair
 "Father of the Bride": Excellent-Very Good
 "The Skipper Surprised His Wife": Fair
 "The Asphalt Jungle": Good-Fair
 "The Happy Years": Good-Fair
 "The Duchess of Idaho": Very Good-Good
 "Crisis": Fair
 "Mystery Street": Fair
 "Three Little Words": Very Good-Good
 "Lady Without Passport": Fair
 "Summer Stock": Very Good-Good
 "Annie Get Your Gun": Very Good
 "Stars in My Crown": Good-Fair
 "Toast of New Orleans": Good
 "Devil's Doorway": Good-Fair
 "A Life of Her Own": Good-Fair

Twenty-five pictures have been checked with the following results: Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 3; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 7; Fair, 9; Fair-Poor, 1.

Paramount

"Paid in Full": Fair
 "Riding High": Good
 "Captain Carey, U.S.A.": Fair
 "No Man of Her Own": Fair
 "The Eagle and the Hawk": Fair
 "My Friend Irma Goes West": Very Good-Good
 "The Lawless": Fair
 "The Furies": Fair
 "Sunset Boulevard": Good
 "Fancy Pants": Good
 "Union Station": Good-Fair
 Eleven pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 6.

RKO

"The Tattooed Stranger": Fair
 "Tarzan and the Slave Girl": Fair
 "The Capture": Fair-Poor
 "Wagonmaster": Fair
 "The Golden Twenties": Fair-Poor
 "The Secret Fury": Fair
 "The White Tower": Fair
 "Where Danger Lives": Fair
 "Treasure Island": Good
 "Our Very Own": Very Good-Good
 "Born to Be Bad": Fair
 Eleven pictures have been checked with the following results: Very Good-Good, 1; Good, 1; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 2.

20th Century-Fox

"Mother Didn't Tell Me": Good-Fair
 "Under My Skin": Fair
 "Cheaper by the Dozen": Excellent-Very Good
 "Wabash Avenue": Good
 "Three Came Home": Very Good-Good
 "The Big Lift": Good-Fair
 "A Ticket to Tomahawk": Fair
 "Night and the City": Good-Fair
 "Love that Brute": Fair
 "The Gunfighter": Good
 "Where the Sidewalk Ends": Good-Fair
 "Stella": Fair
 "The Cariboo Trail": Good-Fair
 "Broken Arrow": Very Good
 "The Black Rose": Good
 "My Blue Heaven": Very Good-Good
 "Panic in the Streets": Good-Fair
 "Farewell to Yesterday": Fair-Poor
 Eighteen pictures have been checked with the following results: Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 3; Good-Fair, 6; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 1.

United Artists

"Love Happy": Good-Fair
 "The Great Plane Robbery": Fair-Poor
 "Quicksand": Fair
 "Champagne for Caesar": Good
 "D.O.A.": Good-Fair
 "Johnny One-Eye": Fair-Poor
 "So Young, So Bad": Good
 "The Underworld Story": Good-Fair
 "Iriquois Trail": Good-Fair
 "The Admiral Was a Lady": Fair
 "The Men": Good-Fair
 "If This Be Sin": Poor
 Twelve pictures have been checked with the following results: Good, 2; Good-Fair, 5; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 2; Poor, 1.

Universal-International

"Bucaneer's Girl": Fair
 "The Kid from Texas": Fair
 "Outside the Wall": Fair
 "Ma & Pa Kettle Go to Town": Good
 "One Way Street": Fair
 "Comanche Territory": Good
 "I Was a Shoplifter": Fair
 "Curtain Call at Cactus Creek": Fair
 "Sierra": Fair
 "Spy Ring": Fair
 "Winchester '73": Very Good-Good

(Continued on back page)

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON SERVICE CONTRACTS

Most all of the organization bulletins issued in recent weeks by the different Allied regional units warn the exhibitors that current service contracts being offered by the RCA Service Company and by the Altec Service Corporation have a new automatic renewal clause.

The bulletins cite the case of one exhibitor who, having learned of a new service company in his territory and desiring to make a change, notified his present service company of his intentions to cancel their service only to learn that the contract he had signed for one year had automatically renewed itself, thereby precluding his ability to make a change that would have been to his advantage.

Ray Feeley, business manager of the Independent Exhibitors, the Allied unit in New England, who brought this condition to the attention of the exhibitors, reminds them of the automatic renewal clauses that used to be hidden in the newsreel contracts but have since been removed. He recommends that the exhibitors, before signing a service contract, demand that the automatic renewal clause be stricken out so that they will be in a position to make a change if and when they so desire.

Incidentally, Feeley, commenting on the effect of a new sound service company operating in New England, conveyed the following important information in a recent letter to Charles Niles, exhibitor leader of the Iowa-Nebraska Allied unit:

"I should like at this time to point out to the leaders of the various Allied units that with the inception of the third sound service company, namely, Image and Sound Service, Inc., RCA and Altec are willing to give the exhibitor reductions on his present and current contract now in force to help the business, but only if they are forced into the situation.

"This is surprising in view of pay raises being granted in other fields of engineering endeavors, and we in New England feel that it is definitely a result of this third company being in the field.

"I write this letter with the knowledge that this sound service will, in the near future, come into your territory and suggest that in the event of proposed raises in rates by either one of the two now currently operating service companies in your territory that you use this knowledge to combat the proposed increases. We have found in New England, as I have above stated, that either RCA or Altec will reduce to the extent of 25 per cent of a now valid contract and I am sure that had we not had the experience of the new company coming into the field, increases would have been in order.

"As you know, Allied has always fought for and sponsored clean competition in our business and I am sure that a third service company in our business can do nothing but bring about more competition and better rates for the individual exhibitor who has been heretofore hog-tied with the situation of having only two companies to deal with on sound service.

"... I again wish to impress you with the fact that this is not an idle threat and in the near future your territory will be served by a new sound service company."

Based on what Ray Feeley has to say, the exhibitor will do well to check his present service contract to see if it has an automatic renewal clause and to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent that clause from taking effect so that he will be in a position to take advantage of a new service offering better terms if and when it is established in his territory.

EXPLOITING FEATURE PICTURES IN NEWSREELS CONDEMNED

At a recent meeting, the board of directors of the Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Kansas and Missouri unanimously passed a resolution condemning the practice of certain unnamed film companies of inserting in their newsreels scenes of premiere showings of their feature pictures to the extent that such scenes are tantamount to coming attraction trailers.

The resolution states that exhibitors, in purchasing newsreels, are entitled to current news scenes and not exploitation matter for a company's product, and that such exploitation scenes serve to create a demand for the exhibition of a particular picture, which the exhibitor either cannot purchase or has not been given an opportunity to purchase.

The resolution "respectfully requests" all the film companies releasing newsreels to discontinue the practice.

The stand taken by Kansas-Missouri Allied is fully justified, for the practice is immoral on at least three grounds: It uses the exhibitor's property—his screen—without his consent to exploit a company's product; it places the exhibitor in the position of helping to exploit pictures that he may not be able to buy and that may be shown by a competitor; and, if the exhibitor is in a position to buy the picture, it creates a demand for its exhibition, hurting the exhibitor's bargaining position at the time he tries to make a deal.

Whether or not the film companies will heed the request made by this exhibitor organization remains to be seen. In any case, the exhibitor who resents the practice can always use his scissors.

"The Magnificent Yankee" with Louis Calhern and Ann Harding

(MGM, February; time, 89 min.)

Very good entertainment! Biographical of the life of Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Magnificent Yankee" stands a very good chance at the box-office, for it is a heart-warming study of a kindly, progressive man, depicted in a way that is sure to enjoy wide audience appeal. The story, which concentrates more on his personal life and friendships than on his public life, has charm, deep human appeal, delightful comedy, and stirring patriotic overtones. Moreover, the performances are excellent, with Louis Calhern outstanding in his extraordinary portrayal of the famed jurist, whom he brings to life as a robust, good-natured man, wise and philosophical, and firm and progressive in his opinions. Ann Harding, as his wise and devoted wife, is completely winning.

Opening with Holmes' arrival in Washington in 1907 to assume his post on the Supreme Court bench, the story traces his life and career from that time to the beginning of the Roosevelt administration in 1933. It details the mutual devotion and understanding between Holmes and his wife; the charming and human atmosphere of his home life; the arrangement by which a different Harvard Law School graduate is given an opportunity each year to serve as his personal secretary for one year; his close friendship with Louis D. Brandeis (excellently portrayed by Eduard Franz) before and after Brandeis becomes an associate justice; and his frequent disagreements with his conservative colleagues on the bench in cases involving many vital issues.

There are many situations that tug at one's heart-strings and others that provoke hearty laughter. A most touching sequence is where Holmes' wife arranges a surprise birthday party for him attended by all the men who had served as his secretaries down through the years; the manner in which the aging Holmes, choked with emotion, accepts the good wishes of his "sons," brings tears to one's eyes. Touching also are the scenes that show Holmes' daily visits to his wife's grave after her death, and his sudden but quiet decision to retire when he finds himself getting drowsy on the bench. A most stirring sequence is where Holmes reads to a friend his last will in which he states why he has faith in the future of the country and in which he bequeaths the bulk of his estate to the Government. Stirring also is the closing sequence, where Holmes, in retirement and weakened by age, is informed that FDR, who had been inaugurated on that day, had come to call on him; like the old soldier that he is, he gets to his feet, snaps back his shoulders, and prepares to meet his commander-in-chief.

It was produced by Armand Deutsch and directed by John Sturges from a screen play by Emmett Lavery, based on his own play of the same name.

Excellent for the family.

"The Taming of Dorothy" with an all-British cast

(Eagle-Lion, November; time, 75 min.)

The one thing that may be said for this farce, which was produced in Italy with a British cast, is that it moves along at a lively pace. As entertainment, however, it is only mildly amusing even though it does have several bright comedy moments. The story is based on the time-worn, improbable theme of two men who look exactly alike, in this case a tough American gangster and a meek Italian bank clerk. Naturally, the complications are brought about by one being mistaken for the other, with the gangster making the most of the mix-up to carry out his nefarious schemes. The trouble with the picture is that the comedy, much of it slapstick, is forced, with the result that the proceedings are often more silly than funny. Another drawback is the poor synchronization; some of the dialogue appears to have been dubbed in. The picture's box-office chances in this country are slim:—

Robert Beatty, a timid Neopolitan bank clerk, is domi-

nated by Jean Kent, his English wife, and by her parents (Margaret Rutherford and Gordon Harker), who were visiting their daughter in Italy. Beatty's troubles start when a notorious American gangster, "casing" the bank, discovers that they look alike. The gangster kidnaps Beatty and forces him to change clothes. Later, when the gangster takes Tamara Lees, his girl, to dinner, he finds himself confronted by Jean who, believing him to be her husband, accuses him of being unfaithful. He goes home with Jean, makes love to her, and soon puts both her and her parents in their place, leaving them stunned. That night, using Beatty's identity, the gangster robs the bank. Meanwhile Beatty escapes from the gangster's henchmen with the aid of Rona Anderson, the gangster's former sweetheart. The police arrive at Jean's apartment to arrest Beatty for the crime but soon find themselves led on a confused chase when both Beatty and the gangster show up. Eventually, the gangster is captured and Beatty cleared. No longer meek, Beatty starts dominating the family, thus leaving Jean bewildered as to whether he or the gangster had returned to her.

It is an Orlux Films presentation, produced by Colin Lesslie and directed by Marie Soldat from a screen play by Noel Langley, based on a play by Pepine de Filippe.

Adult fare.

"Branded" with Alan Ladd, Mona Freeman and Charles Bickford

(Paramount, January; time, 95 min.)

A good western melodrama, photographed in Technicolor. While it is sure to please in situations that favor outdoor pictures, it should also make its mark elsewhere for, in addition to the draw of Alan Ladd's name, it has all the vigorous action one expects to find in a picture of this type. Moreover, its story about the reformation of a gunfighter is better than average, holding one's interest all the way through. Although Ladd portrays a desperado who enters a contemptible conspiracy to fleece a wealthy rancher by posing as his long-lost son, he gains the spectator's sympathy by his sincere desire to make amends and the risks he takes to deliver the real son to his grieving family. The outdoor scenic backgrounds are exceptionally good:—

Ladd, a notorious gunfighter, is approached by Robert Keith and John Berkes, who propose that he pose as the missing son of Charles Bickford, a wealthy Texas rancher, whose boy had been kidnapped twenty-five years previously. All that Ladd needed was an identifying birthmark, which Berkes could tattoo on his shoulder. Ladd agrees and, soon after, Keith murders Berkes to keep him from sharing in the anticipated loot. Ladd heads for Bickford's ranch, where he obtains a job as a cowhand, and by clever maneuvering he permits Bickford to discover the birthmark himself. When Ladd claims to know nothing about his childhood, but conveniently "remembers" a few things, Bickford and his wife (Selena Royle) become convinced that he is their son. Their happiness is shared by Mona Freeman, their daughter. The affection the family showers on him makes Ladd ashamed, and later, when he learns that Keith himself had kidnapped the child and had left him with Joseph Calleia, a Mexican bandit, he breaks with Keith and tells Mona the truth. He then crosses the border into Mexico, gets into Calleia's mountain stronghold and, at gunpoint, forces Peter Hanson, Bickford's real son, to accompany him back to the ranch, which they reach only after a wild and exciting chase with Calleia in vengeful pursuit. Before long, however, Calleia shows up at the ranch determined to kill Peter for having deserted him, but he softens when Ladd points out that the young man loved him, too, and that he wanted to divide his time between his real parents and his foster father. Having arranged a friendly settlement, Ladd prepares to leave, but Mona, now in love with him, induces him to remain.

It was produced by Mel Epstein and directed by Rudolph Mate from a screen play by Sydney Boehm and Cyril Hume, based on a novel by Evan Evans.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The West Point Story" with James Cagney, Virginia Mayo and Doris Day

(Warner Bros., November 25; time, 107 min.)

Combining comedy, romance, music and dancing, with bright dialogue and breezy performances, "The West Point Story" offers entertainment that should be enjoyed thoroughly by the rank and file. The story is somewhat incredible, but it is refreshingly different, fast-moving, and vastly amusing. The picture-goers will get a kick out of James Cagney, who plays to the hilt the part of a brash Broadway musical director, a fellow who is as quick with his fists as he is with his nimble dancing feet. The complications he gets himself into when he is compelled to become a cadet in order to stage West Point's annual show make for many laugh-provoking situations. His bombastic temperamental outbursts should prove a source of merriment to every one. Musically, the picture is very good; the tuneful songs as put over by Doris Day and Gordon MacRae are highly enjoyable, as are the song and dance numbers that are handled by Cagney, Virginia Mayo and Gene Nelson:—

Cagney, out of work, is compelled to accept an offer from Roland Winters, a producer he disliked, to go to West Point to stage a show written by Cadet Gordon MacRae, his nephew. Convinced that the show is a potential hit, Winter instructs Cagney to induce his nephew to quit the Academy and to appear in the show on Broadway. Cagney goes to the Academy, accompanied by Virginia, his girl. He soon becomes annoyed over Academy rules that hinder the rehearsals, and one day, in a fit of temper, he slugs a cadet. To remain at the Academy, Cagney is told that he must enlist as a plebe, subject to all the rules. He balks at this, but quickly agrees when Virginia threatens to leave him. From then on the cadets take pleasure in making things tough for him, but he takes their jibes in stride. Meanwhile he is unsuccessful in his efforts to induce MacRae to quit. Complications set in when Cagney introduces MacRae to Doris Day, a Hollywood star, and both fall deeply in love. When she is ordered back to the coast by her studio bosses, MacRae, heartbroken, goes A.W.O.L. to follow her. Cagney brings MacRae back to save his army career. The net result of all this is that MacRae is placed under arrest and the show cancelled. Learning that under West Point rules a visiting celebrity could obtain amnesty for all cadets being punished, Cagney, by virtue of a French decoration he had earned during the war, induces the French Premier to pay an official visit to the Academy and to ask for the amnesty. Thus the show goes on and, at the finish, MacRae, now reunited with Doris, shows his appreciation to Cagney by giving him the book and stage rights as a gift.

It was produced by Louis F. Edelman and directed by Roy Del Ruth from a story by Irving Wallace, who collaborated on the screen play with John Monks, Jr. and Charles Hoffman.

Suitable for the family.

"Counterspy Meets Scotland Yard" with Howard St. John and Amanda Blake

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 67 min.)

Just a moderately interesting program spy melodrama, produced on a modest budget. The story is far-fetched, but it provides enough suspense and excitement to squeeze by as a supporting feature in secondary situations where audiences are not too concerned about the plausibility of a plot, or about its obvious developments. The script doesn't give the players much of a chance, but all do their best to make their roles believable:—

Howard St. John, chief of America's counterspy division, becomes concerned when top secrets about a guided missile reservation leak out to enemy agents. Lest the leak might lead to international complications, Scotland Yard assigns, Ron Randell, its ace investigator, to work with St. John. When Amanda Blake, a secretary at the reservation, asks to be transferred to another job, Randall becomes suspicious. He trails her to the office of Lewis Martin, a doctor, who was treating her for severe headaches. June Vincent, the doctor's nurse, was a friend of Amanda's,

but she did not know that June and the doctor were members of the enemy spy ring, and that, by putting her under the influence of drugs, they made her talk about the vital notes she took on the job, and not, as she thought, about the reasons for her headaches. Randall starts a romance with Amanda, and when she tells him of her visits to the doctor and of the needle injections, he soon deduces that they were using her as a dupe. St. John and Randall permit Amanda to visit the doctor once again, but by setting up an elaborate trap they succeed in apprehending the entire spy ring.

It was produced by Wallace MacDonald and directed by Seymour Friedman from a story and screen play by Harold R. Greene.

Harmless for children.

"Cyrano de Bergerac" with Jose Ferrer and Mala Powers

(United Artists, roadshow; time, 112 min.)

Excellent! There is no question that those who appreciate real art in motion pictures will wax ecstatic over this film version of Edmond Rostand's 50-year-old classic play. Of primary importance, of course, is the superb acting of Jose Ferrer in the title role. Mr. Ferrer captivates the viewer completely by his exquisite portrayal of Cyrano, the valiant long-nosed hero, an expert swordsman, philosopher, poet, wit, playwright and loyal friend. His deft handling of a sword, his dash and derring-do, his perfect diction, which adds to the beauty and lyricism of the play's language, his glibness with a comedy line, his expertness in bringing out fully the inherent pathos of the characterization, prove Mr. Ferrer to be an artist of the first order; his performance will no doubt make him a leading contender for this year's Academy Award.

The story, which takes place during the seventeenth century and which is based on the Brian Hooker translation of the play, revolves around the hopeless love of Cyrano de Bergerac, a beloved member of the Gascony Guards, for the beautiful Roxanne (Mala Powers), his distant cousin. Learning that she had fallen in love with Christian (William Prince), a young guard who loved her in turn but who was inexperienced in the art of love-making. Cyrano takes the young man in hand, puts beautiful words of love on his lips, writes fervent love-letters for him, and even impersonates him in the shadow under a balcony to make pretty love speeches to Roxanne, but the words he speaks and writes are those of his own heart. On the eve of the war between France and Spain, Roxanne and Christian marry, with the ceremony being made possible by Cyrano's resourcefulness. When Roxanne visits him on the battlefield and tells him how much his letters meant to her, Christian realizes that it is Cyrano she really loves, for the words had been his. Christian, however, dies from a mortal wound before he can make this clear to Roxanne. She enters a convent and for fifteen years is visited regularly by Cyrano. One day, after being injured by enemies, Cyrano leaves a sick bed to keep his appointment with Roxanne at the convent. There, as he reads aloud the last letter she had received from Christian, Roxanne realizes that the words were Cyrano's and that he had secretly loved her all his life. He collapses soon after and dies.

A brief synopsis cannot convey the story's humor or its emotional appeal. The closing scenes, where Cyrano is shown dying in the presence of the woman he loved but to whom he had never expressed his feelings out of a belief that she could not love a face as ugly as his, is most pathetic. Throughout one feels warm sympathy for Cyrano because he denies his own feelings to further the romance of Roxanne and Christian. The melodramatic action, such as the battle scenes and the sword fights, provide many thrills. The picture deserves high praise for its excellence in all departments—acting, direction, production and music. It is, of course, an entertainment that will appeal chiefly to high-class audiences. It should prove absorbing to high school and college students.

It was produced by Stanley Kramer and directed by Michael Gordon from a screen play by Carl Foreman. George Glass is credited as associate producer.

"The Tougher They Come" with Wayne Morris and Preston Foster

(Columbia, December; time, 69 min.)

A routine program melodrama, with a lumber camp background. The story is neither novel nor plausible, and one knows almost from the beginning just how it will progress and end. Yet it should prove acceptable to the action fans who are not too exacting in their demands, for, though it has some slow spots, the melodramatic action is virile and the stock shots of logging scenes colorful. There is hardly any human interest in the story, and the principal characters are not particularly appealing. The direction and acting are no more than adequate, and the photography, which is in sepia-tone, is good:—

Preston Foster and Wayne Morris, close pals, find their friendship strained where women are concerned, but this obstacle removes itself when Foster marries Kay Buckley after he inherits a lumber camp. Foster asks Morris, an expert high-rigger, to work with him, but Morris declines, preferring to try another business. Foster finds the camp in a rundown condition, unaware that it was the result of "accidents" caused by William Bishop, his foreman, who was in league with a lumber combine seeking to buy the camp at a very low figure. With Foster busy trying to organize the camp on a paying basis, Kay soon becomes bored. Foster decides to sell out when he finds himself without cash and heavily in debt, but Morris comes to his rescue with a loan and agrees to work at the camp. Gloria Henry, daughter of Frank McHugh, the camp's cook, is attracted to Morris. Meanwhile Kay, much to Gloria's disgust, starts making a play for Morris herself. Kay's behavior gives Bishop an opportunity to break up the friendship between Foster and Morris by making Foster suspicious of his wife and pal. Foster orders Morris out of the camp. Just then Bishop, in a final effort to make Foster sell out to the combine, starts a forest fire. His action is witnessed by McHugh, who notifies Morris. While Morris gives Bishop a thrashing and forces a confession from him, Foster, overcome by smoke, is trapped in the flaming forest. Kay, sensing his danger, realizes her love for him and risks her life to rescue him. With the fire finally conquered, Kay and Foster reach a new understanding, while Gloria wins Morris.

It was produced by Wallace MacDonald and directed by Ray Nazarro from a screen play by George Bricker.

Best suited for mature audiences.

"Pygmy Island" with Johnny Weissmuller

(Columbia, November; time, 69 min.)

This latest of the "Jungle Jim" program pictures is a fair enough adventure melodrama of its kind. As entertainment, however, it is best suited for the juveniles, who will appreciate its serial-like, far-fetched story, which has Johnny Weissmuller aiding the U. S. Army when it tangles with enemy agents in the African jungle. The children should enjoy in particular the doings of a tribe of pygmies, Weissmuller's friends, who help him to combat the enemy spies. For added thrills, Weissmuller has several battles with ferocious animals, including a crocodile and a gorilla. The sepia-tone photography is good:—

Roaming through the jungle, Weissmuller, a famous guide, finds the body of a pygmy and discovers that the little fellow carried a pair of U. S. Army identification tags issued to Ann Savage who, together with a small expeditionary force, had disappeared while searching in the jungle for the N'gona plant, whose fiber was of such great tensile strength that the United States considered it a strategic war material. Weissmuller notifies Washington, and shortly thereafter he is joined by a U. S. Army unit headed by David Bruce, a major, who asks him to guide the unit into the pygmy country where the N'gona plant apparently grew, and where Ann and her party must have been swallowed up. Unknown to Weissmuller, Steven Geray, a suave European trader, and William Tannen, his aide, were in the pay of another foreign nation that sought to discover the location of the plants. Geray's men had wiped out Ann's

unit in an attack, and Ann, the only survivor, had gone into hiding with the friendly pygmies. When Weissmuller and the Army unit pushes through the jungle, they are constantly attacked by Geray's men, but Weissmuller's quick thinking and heroism save the unit every time it is about to be ambushed, and after making contact with the pygmies he even saves Ann and the pygmies' chief from capture by the enemy. Eventually, Weissmuller himself is captured and the enemy agents use him as a hostage to get past the American unit with some of the valued plants. The pygmies, however, take to the trees and lasso the enemy, rescuing Weissmuller and enabling the Americans to take charge of the situation. It ends with the pygmies giving the Americans a load of N'gona seeds and promising to grow enough plants themselves to supply the needs of the United States.

It was produced by Sam Katzman and directed by William Berke from a screen play by Carroll Young.

Suitable for the family.

"Emergency Wedding" with Larry Parks and Barbara Hale

(Columbia, November; time, 78 min.)

This is a remake of "You Belong to Me," which Columbia produced in 1941 with Barbara Stanwyck and Henry Fonda in the leading roles. For the first half of the picture, it is a fair romantic comedy and, even though the story lacks substance and the characterization of the hero is somewhat silly, the situations are amusing enough to provoke considerable laughter. It falters in the second half, however, when the story takes on a serious tone because of the hero's fight against the American Medical Association's regulations that prevent foreign doctors from practicing in this country until they have served an internship. The introduction of this subject is entirely out of place in this type of story. Moreover, the abrupt change from comedy to drama is difficult to take, with the result that, at the finish, when the mood reverts to comedy, one no longer finds the proceedings amusing:—

Larry Parks, a millionaire playboy, falls in love with Barbara Hale, a pretty doctor, after she treats him for a minor injury. She warns him that marriage to her might prove difficult because of all the time she must devote to her work, but he assures her that he understands and induces her to become his wife. From the beginning her patients, many of them men, make innumerable demands on her time. Annoyed, Parks forgets his promise about understanding; he makes a scene in Barbara's office several times, interfering with her work, and becomes extremely jealous over the attentions she pays to one patient, Willard Parker, her lawyer and former suitor. He apologizes each time he makes a fool of himself and promises to reform, but he does not. Barbara finally decides to leave him, after calling him an idler who could accomplish nothing in life. He obtains a job as a clerk in a department store, but he is soon recognized by the other clerks who force his resignation because he was taking away work from a poor man who needed the job. Leaving the store dejected, Parks is saved from injury when a newsboy pushes him out of the path of a truck but is hurt doing it. Parks rushes the youngster to a hospital only to find that Edward Franz, the only surgeon available, cannot operate because he is a foreigner who had not served his internship. Parks induces him to operate anyway, and the boy's life is saved. This medical foible makes Parks fighting mad and he takes up the cause of alien doctors before a medical committee. He loses, however, when Barbara opposes his views. Parks then builds his own hospital to help foreign doctors get a start. Satisfied that he had accomplished something worthwhile, Parks heads for Reno where Barbara had gone to divorce him and marry Parker. There, after a series of mixups, Parker is the one who shows a jealous streak, thus provoking Barbara into deciding to remain Park's wife.

Nat Perrin produced it and collaborated on the screenplay with Claude Binyon, based on a story by Dalton Trumbo. It was directed by Edward Buzzell.

Unobjectionable morally.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Allied Artists Features

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- 17 Southside 1-1000—DeFore-KingNov. 12
 18 Short Grass—Cameron-DownsDec. 3

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

1949-50

- 264 Streets of Ghost Town—Starrett (54 m.)....Aug. 3
 207 Beware of Blondie—Lake-Singleton.....Aug. 10
 249 Indian Territory—Gene Autry (70 m.).....Sept.
 262 Across the Badlands—Starrett (54 m.).....Sept. 14
 239 The Fuller Brush Girl—Ball-Albert.....Oct.
 246 The Blazing Sun—Gene Autry (70 m.).....Nov.
 241 Killer That Stalked New York—Keyes-Korvin...Dec.
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 324 Convicted—Ford-CrawfordAug.
 317 The Petty Girl—Cummings-Caulfield.....Sept.
 304 When You're Smiling—Courtland-Albright..Sept. 21
 341 Last of the Buccaneers—Henreid-Ooakie.....Oct.
 311 Rookie Fireman—Williams-ReynoldsOct. 12
 362 Raiders of Tomahawk Creek—Starrett (55 m.)Oct. 26
 328 Between Midnight and Dawn—Stevens-O'Brien-
 Storm (formerly "Prowl Sar").....Oct.
 323 Harriet Craig—Crawford-CareyNov.
 332 Emergency Wedding—Parks-HaleNov.
 342 Pygmy Island—WeissmullerNov.
 303 The Texan Meets Calamity Jane—
 Ankers-Ellison (71 m.).....Nov.
 313 Chain Gang—Kennedy-LordNov.
 340 He's a Cockeyed Wonder—Rooney-Moore.....Dec.
 The Tougher They Come—Morris-Foster.....Dec.
 361 Lightning Guns—Starrett (55 m.).....Dec.

Eagle-Lion Classics Features

(165 West 46th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

- 026 Destination Moon—Archer-AndersonAug.
 025 The Torch—Goddard-ArmendarizAug.
 045 Eye Witness—Montgomery-BanksSept.
 044 High Lonesome—Barrymore-WillsSept.
 Naughty Arlette—British castSept.
 071 I Killed Geronimo—Ellison-HerrickSept.
 Paper Gallows—British castSept.
 The Taming of Dorothy—British cast.....Sept.
 One Minute to Twelve—Swedish cast.....Oct.
 So Long at the Fair—British cast.....Oct.
 The Second Face—Raines-Bennett-Bruce.....Oct.
 The Kangaroo Kid—Borg-Malone.....Oct.
 Two Lost Worlds—Laura Elliott.....Oct.
 Prehistoric Women—Luez-NixonNov.
 They Were Not Divided—British cast.....Nov.
 Rogue River—Calhoun-MadisonNov.
 Mr. Universe—Carson-Paige-LahrNov.
 046 The Sun Sets at Dawn—Reed-Parr.....Nov.
 Golden Salamander—British cast.....Dec.
 The Kid from Mexico—Rooney-Hendrix.....Dec.
 Tinderbox—Cartoon featureDec.
 White Heather—Milland-RocDec.

Lippert-Screen Guild Features

(255 Hyde St., San Francisco 2, Calif.)

1949-50

- 4931 I Shot Billy the Kid—Barry-Neal.....Aug. 25
 4907 Return of Jesse James—Ireland-Dvorak....Sept. 8
 4934 Train to Tombstone—Barry-Neal.....Sept. 15
 4933 Border Rangers—Barry-Neal (57 m.).....Oct. 6
 4911 Holiday Rhythm—All-star cast.....Oct. 13
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 5011 Bandit Queen—Britton-ParkerDec. 1
 5009 Desperate Men—Foster-Greynot set
 5006 The Steel Helmet—Evans-Edwards.....not set

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

1949-50

(1540 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

- 36 Three Little Words—Astaire-Skelton-Ellen.....Aug.
 37 Lady Without Passport—Lamar-Hodiak.....Aug.
 38 Summer Stock—Garland-KellyAug.
 39 Annie Get Your Gun—Hutton-Keel.....Aug.
 40 Stars in My Crown—McCrea-Drew.....not set
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 103 Toast of New Orleans—Grayson-Lanza-Niven..Sept.
 102 Devil's Doorway—Robert Taylor.....Sept.
 101 A Life of Her Own—Turner-Milland.....Sept.
 106 The Miniver Story—Garson-Pidgeon.....Oct.
 104 Right Cross—Powell-Allyson-MontalbanOct.
 105 To Please a Lady—Gable-Stanwyck.....Oct.

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- 110 The Next Voice You Hear—Whitmore-Davis...Oct.
 107 Dial 1119—Thompson-BrasselleNov.
 108 Two Weeks with Love—Powell-Montalban.....Nov.
 109 King Solomon's Mines—Kerr-Granger.....Nov.
 111 Mrs. O'Malley & Mr. Malone—Main-Whitmore..Dec.
 112 Pagan Love Song—Williams-Keel-Montalban....Dec.
 Grounds for Marriage—Johnson-Grayson.....Jan.
 Watch the Birdie—Red Skelton.....Jan.
 Kim—Flynn-StockwellJan.
 The Magnificent Yankee—Calhern-Harding.....Feb.
 Cause for Alarm—Young-Sullivan.....Feb.
 Vengeance Valley—Lancaster-WalkerFeb.

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

1949-50

- 4943 Silver Raiders—Whip Wilson (55 m.)....Aug. 20
 4908 Big Timber—McDowall-DonnellSept. 10
 4953 Law of the Panhandle—J. M. Brown (55 m.)Sept. 17
 4906 Bomba and the Hidden City—Sheffield.....Sept. 24
 4944 Cherokee Uprising—Whip Wilson (57 m.)...Oct. 8
 4918 Hot Rod—Lydon-WintersOct. 22
 4916 Blues Buster—Bowery Boys.....Oct. 29
 4954 Outlaw Gold—J. M. Brown
 (formerly "Massacre Valley").....Nov. 26
 4945 Outlaws of Texas—Whip Wilson.....Dec. 10
 4920 Call of the Klondike—Kirby Grant.....Dec. 17
 4904 Blue Blood—Williams-Nigh-LongJan. 7
 4946 Abilene Trail—Whip Wilson.....Feb. 4

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 5199 A Modern Marriage—Hadley-Field.....Oct. 15
 5117 The Squared Circle—Joe Kirkwood.....Nov. 5
 5125 Father's Wild Game—Walburn.....Dec. 3
 5107 Trail Dust—Wayne Morris.....Dec. 24
 5120 Navy Bound—Neal-ToomeyJan. 21
 5101 Cavalry Scout—Rod Cameron.....Feb. 11

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York 18, N. Y.)

1949-50

- 4926 The Furies—Stanwyck-HustonAug.
 4927 Sunset Boulevard—Swanson-HoldenAug.
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 5001 Fancy Pants—Hope-BallSept.
 5002 Union Station—Holden-OlsenSept.
 5003 Copper Canyon—Lamarr-MillandOct.
 5004 Dark City—Heston-ScottOct.
 Going My Way—reissueOct.
 5008 Casino to Korea—Documentary.....Oct.
 5006 Let's Dance—Hutton-AstaireNov.
 5005 Tripoli—Payne-O'HaraNov.
 5007 Mr. Music—Crosby-Coburn-HusseyDec.
 Branded—Ladd-FreemanJan.
 Samson & Delilah—(general release).....Jan.
 The Goldbergs—Molly Berg.....Jan.
 September Affair—Fontaine-CottenFeb.
 The Great Missouri Raid—Corey-Carey.....Feb.

RKO Features

1948-49

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.)
 (No national release dates)

- 023 The White Tower—Ford-Valli
 024 Where Danger Lives—Mitchum-Domergue
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 191 Treasure Island—Driscoll-Newton
 151 Our Very Own—Blythe-Granger-Evans
 101 Born To Be Bad—Fontaine-Ryan
 104 Bunco Squad—Sterling-Dixon
 152 Edge of Doom—Granger-Andrews-Evans
 103 Outrage—Andrews-Powers
 102 Walk Softly, Stranger—Valli-Cotten
 105 Border Treasure—Tim Holt (59 m.)
 Mad Wednesday—Harold Lloyd
 Joan of Arc—(general release)
 Never a Dull Moment—Dunne-MacMurray
 Story of a Divorce—Davis-Young
 Vendetta—Dolenz-Domergue
 Tarzan and the Amazons—reissue
 Tarzan and the Leopard Woman—reissue

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.)

1949-50

- 4925 Lonely Heart Bandits—Patrick-Rockwell...Aug. 29
 4967 Frisco Tornado—Allan Lane (60 m.).....Sept. 6
 4953 Redwood Forest Trail—Rex Allen (60 m.)..Sept. 18
 4929 Prisoners in Petticoats—Perkins-Rockwell...Sept. 18
 4943 Sunset in the West—Roy Rogers (67 m.)...Sept. 25
 4968 Rustlers on Horseback—Lane (60 m.).....Oct. 23
 4944 North of the Great Divide—Rogers (67 m.)..Nov. 15
 4954 Under Mexicali Stars—Rex Allen (67 m.)...Nov. 20
 4974 The Missourians—Monte Hale (60 m.)....Nov. 25
 4946 Trail of Robin Hood—Rogers (67 m.).....Dec. 15
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 5001 Surrender—Ralston-CarrollSept. 15
 5002 Hit Parade of 1951—Carroll-Macdonald....Oct. 15
 5003 Macbeth—Orson WellesOct. 20
 5004 Rio Grande—Wayne-O'HaraNov. 15
 5005 California Passage—Tucker-MaraDec. 15
 Rough Riders of Durango—Alan Lane.....Dec. 20

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

1950

- 018 Stella—Sheridan-Mature-WayneAug.
 020 The Caribou Trail—Randolph ScottAug.
 014 Broken Arrow—Stewart-PagetAug.
 019 The Black Rose—Power-Aubrey-WellesSept.
 021 My Blue Heaven—Grable-DaileySept.
 022 Panic in the Streets—Widmark-DouglasSept.
 028 Farewell to Yesterday—DocumentarySept.
 023 The Fireball—Rooney-O'BrienOct.
 024 Mister 880—Lancaster-Gwenn-McGuireOct.
 025 No Way Out—Widmark-DarnellOct.
 027 I'll Get By—Haver-Lundigan-De HavenOct.
 029 Two Flags West—Darnell-Wilde-CottenNov.
 030 All About Eve—Davis-BaxterNov.
 031 The Jackpot—Stewart-MedinaNov.
 032 American Guerrilla in the Philippines—
 Power-PrelleDec.
 033 For Heaven's Sake—Bennett-Webb-Blondell ...Dec.
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1951 Season

- Halls of Montezuma—WidmarkJan.
 The Mudlark—Irene DunneJan.
 The Man Who Cheated Himself—Cobb-Wyatt..Jan.
 I'd Climb the Highest Mountain—
 Hayward-LundiganFeb.
 The Scarlet Pen—Boyer-DarnellFeb.
 Sword of Monte Cristo—Montgomery-Corday...Feb.

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York 19, N. Y.)

- Iroquois Trail—Montgomery-MarshallJune 16
 Once a Thief—Romero-Havoc-McDonaldJuly 7
 The Underworld Story—Duryea-Storm (reviewed
 as "The Whipped")July 21
 The Admiral Was a Lady—Hendrix-O'Brien ...Aug. 4
 The Men—Brando-WrightAug. 25
 If This Be Sin—Loy-Cummins-GreeneSept. 8
 Three Husbands—Williams-Arden-WarrickNov. 3
 The Sound of Fury—Ryan-LovejoyJan. 15
 The Second Woman—Young-Drake
 (formerly "Ellen")not set
 New Mexico—Ayres-Maxwell-Coreynot set
 Cyrano de Bergerac—Ferrer-Powersnot set

Universal-International Features

(445 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y.)

1949-50

- 924 Abbott & Costello in the Foreign Legion.....Aug.
 925 The Desert Hawk—De Carlo-Greene.....Aug.
 926 Louisa—Coburn-Gwenn-ByingtonAug.
 927 Madness of the Heart—English cast.....Aug.
 928 Saddle Tramp—McCrea-HendrixSept.
 929 Shakedown—Duff-Donlevy-DowSept.
 930 The Sleeping City—Conte-Gray-DowSept.
 931 Wyoming Mail—McNally-SmithOct.
 932 Woman on the Run—Sheridan-O'KeefeOct.
 905 Tight Little Island—British cast.....not set
 (End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

101	Hamlet—Laurence Olivier	Nov.
102	The Milkman—O'Connor-Durante	Nov.
103	Deported—Toren-Chandler	Nov.
104	Kansas Raiders—Murphy-Donlevy	Nov.
105	Undercover Girl—Smith-Brady	Dec.
106	Mystery Submarine—Carey-Toren	Dec.

Warner Bros. Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York 18, N. Y.)

1949-50

928	Bright Leaf—Cooper-Bacall-Carson	July 1
929	The Great Jewel Robbery—David Brian	July 15
930	The Flame and the Arrow—Lancaster-Mayo	July 22
931	50 Years Before Your Eyes—Documentary	July 29
932	Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye—Cagney	Aug. 19

(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

001	Tea for Two—Day-McRae	Sept. 2
002	Alcatraz Island—reissue	Sept. 9
003	San Quentin—reissue	Sept. 9
004	Pretty Baby—Morgan-Drake-Scott	Sept. 16
005	Breaking Point—Garfield-Neal	Sept. 30
006	Three Secrets—Parker-Neal-Roman	Oct. 14
007	The Glass Menagerie—Wyman-Douglas	Oct. 28
008	Rocky Mountain—Flynn-Wymore	Nov. 11
009	The West Point Story—Cagney-Mayo	Nov. 25
010	Breakthrough—Brian-Agar-Lovejoy	Dec. 9
011	Dallas—Cooper-Roman-Massey	Dec. 22

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

3951	Korn Kobblers—Favorite (reissue) (11 m.)	Sept. 21
3801	Snow Fiesta—Sports (9 m.)	Sept. 28
3851	30th Anniversary Special—Screen Snap. (11 m.)	Sept. 28
3901	Stars of Tomorrow—Novelty (10 m.)	Sept. 28
3602	Land of Fun—Favorite (reissue) (7 m.)	Oct. 5
3551	Candid Microphone No. 1 (11 m.)	Oct. 12
3852	Fun at Shadow Mountain—Screen Snap. (9½ m.)	Oct. 19
3802	King of the Pins—Sports (9 m.)	Oct. 26
3651	The Versailles—Cavalcade of B'way (10 m.)	Oct. 26
3603	Peaceful Neighbors—Favorite (reissue) (8½ m.)	Nov. 9
3853	Hollywood Goes to Bat—Screen Snapshots (10 m.)	Nov. 16
3952	Drug Store Follies—Variety (reissue) (10½ m.)	Nov. 23
3501	The Popcorn Story—Jolly Frolics	Nov. 30
3803	Mat Masters—Sports	Nov. 30
3604	The Foolish Bunny—Favorite (reissue) (8 m.)	Dec. 7
3552	Candid Microphone No. 2 (10 m.)	Dec. 14
3953	A Night at the Troc—Variety (reissue)	Dec. 21
3702	Bungled Bungalow—Mr. Magoo	Dec. 28
3652	The China Doll—Cavalcade of B'way	Dec. 28
3751	Prince Igor—Music to Remember (9½ m.)	
3752	Nutcracker Suite—Music to Remember	
3753	Piano Concerto in B-Flat Minor—Music to Remember	
3754	Peer Gynt Suite—Music to Remember	
3755	1812 Overture—Music to Remember	
3756	Swan Lake Ballet—Music to Remember	

(Editor's Note: No specific release dates have been set for the "Music to Remember" series. Exhibitors may book a particular subject at any time.)

Columbia—Two Reels

3401	Three Hams on Rye—Stooges (15½ m.)	Sept. 7
3411	A Blunderful Time—Andy Clyde (16½ m.)	Sept. 7
3431	Shot in the Escape—Favorite (reissue) (19 m.)	Sept. 14
3402	Studio Stooges—Stooges (16 m.)	Oct. 5
3412	Foy Meets Girl—Eddie Foy (16½ m.)	Oct. 5
3421	Two Roaming Champs—Baer-Rosenblum (16½ m.)	Oct. 12
3120	Pirates of the High Seas—Serial (15 ep.)	Nov. 2
3403	Slap Happy Sleuths—Stooges (16 m.)	Nov. 9
3422	A Slip and a Miss—Hugh Herbert (16 m.)	Nov. 9
3432	Free Rent—Favorite (reissue) (18½ m.)	Nov. 16
3404	A Snitch in Time—Stooges (16½ m.)	Dec. 7
3433	Taming of the Snood—Favorite (reissue)	Dec. 14
3423	Innocently Guilty—Bert Wheeler	Dec. 21

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

W-232	Garden Gopher—Carton (6 m.)	Sept. 30
W-261	Zoot Cat—Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)	Oct. 7
W-233	The Framed Cat—Cartoon (7 m.)	Oct. 21
S-253	Table Toppers—Pete Smith (8 m.)	Oct. 21
W-234	The Chump Champ—Cartoon (7 m.)	Nov. 4
S-254	Curious Contests—Pete Smith (8 m.)	Nov. 11
W-235	Cue Ball Cat—Cartoon (7 m.)	Nov. 25
W-262	The Early Bird Dood It—Cartoon (reissue) (9 m.)	Dec. 2
W-236	The Peachy Cobbler—Cartoon (7 m.)	Dec. 9

Paramount—One Reel

R10-1	Desert High Jinks—Sportlight (10 m.)	Oct. 6
E10-1	Quick on the Vigor—Popeye (7 m.)	Oct. 6
K10-1	Just for Fun—Pacemaker (10 m.)	Oct. 6
R10-3	Glacier Fishing—Sportlight (10 m.)	Oct. 6
Z10-1	Her Honor, The Mare—Popeye (reissue) (7 m.)	Oct. 6
Z10-2	We're On Our Way to Rio—Popeye (reissue) (7 m.)	Oct. 6
B10-1	Casper's Spree Under the Sea—Casper (8m.)	Oct. 13
P10-1	Voice of the Turkey—Noveltoon (7 m.)	Oct. 13
R10-2	Outboard Shenanigans—Sportlight (10 m.)	Oct. 16
K10-2	The City of Beautiful Girls—Pacemaker (10 m.)	Oct. 27
Z10-3	Popeye a la Mode—Popeye (reissue) (7 m.)	Nov. 3
E10-2	Riot in Rhythm—Popeye (7 m.)	Nov. 10
P10-2	Mice Meeting You—Noveltoon (7 m.)	Nov. 10
X10-1	Fiesta Time—Screen Song (7 m.)	Nov. 17
Z10-4	Shape Ahoy—Popeye (reissue) (7 m.)	Nov. 17
X10-2	Fresh Yeggs—Screen Song (7 m.)	Nov. 17
R10-4	Targets on Parade—Sportlight (10 m.)	Nov. 24
E10-3	Farmer & the Belle—Popeye (7 m.)	Dec. 1
K10-3	Country Cop—Pacemaker (10 m.)	Dec. 8
R10-5	Dobbin Steps Out—Sportlight (10 m.)	Dec. 8
B10-2	Once Upon a Rhyme—Casper (8 m.)	Dec. 15
P10-3	Sockabye Kitty—Noveltoon (7 m.)	Dec. 22

Paramount—Two Reels**Beginning of 1950-51 Season**

T10-1	The New Pioneers—Special (20 m.)	Sept. 1
FF10-1	Mardi Gras—Musical Parade (19 m.) (reissue)	Oct. 6
FF10-2	Caribbean Romance—Musical Parade (19 m.) (reissue)	Oct. 6
FF10-3	Showboat Serenade—Musical Parade (20 m.) (reissue)	Oct. 6
FF10-4	You Hit the Spot—Musical Parade (18 m.) (reissue)	Oct. 6
FF10-5	Bombalera—Musical Parade (19 m.) (reissue)	Oct. 6
FF10-6	Halfway to Heaven—Musical Parade (19 m.) (reissue)	Oct. 6

RKO—One Reel

14101	Hook, Lion & Sinker—Disney (7 m.)	Sept. 1
14201	It's Only Muscle—Screenliner (9 m.)	Sept. 8
14801	The Costume Designer—Industry Short (9 m.)	Sept. 15
14301	Crocodile Hunters—Sportscope (9 m.)	Sept. 22
14102	Camp Dog—Disney (7 m.)	Sept. 22
14202	Fairest of the Finest—Screenliner (9 m.)	Oct. 6
14103	Bee At the Beach—Disney (7 m.)	Oct. 13
14302	Football's Mighty Mustang—Sports (9 m.)	Oct. 20
14701	The Moth & the Flame—Disney (reissue) (8 m.)	Oct. 27
14104	Hold That Pose—Disney (7 m.)	Nov. 3
14702	Donald's Golf Game—Disney (reissue) (8 m.)	Dec. 29

RKO—Two Reels

13301	Beaver Valley—Special (32 m.)	Aug. 25
13501	Act Your Age—Edgar Kennedy (reissue) (18 m.)	Sept. 1
13601	Fits in a Fiddle—Clark & McCullough (reissue) (15 m.)	Sept. 8
13101	Pinkerton Man—This Is America (16 m.)	Sept. 15
13701	Texas Tough Guy—Leon Errol (18 m.)	Sept. 15
13401	Waiting for Baby—Comedy Special (17m.)	Sept. 22
13502	'Tain't Legal—Edgar Kennedy (reissue) (16 m.)	Sept. 29
13001	You Can Beat the A-Bomb—Special (20m.)	Sept. 29
13201	Pal, Fugitive Dog—My Pal (21 m.)	Oct. 6
13102	Seven Cities of Washington—This Is America (15 m.)	Oct. 13
13503	Kennedy the Great—Edgar Kennedy (reissue) (19 m.)	Oct. 27

(Continued on next page)

- 13602 Hey, Nanny, Nanny—Clark & McCullough
(reissue) (21 m.).....Oct. 20
13402 Night Club Daze—Comedy Special (16 m.)Nov. 24
13603 Alibi, Bye, Bye—Clark & McCullough
(reissue) (21 m.).....Nov. 17
13504 Mutiny in the County—Edgar Kennedy
13901 Football Headliners of 1950—Special.....Dec. 8
(reissue) (17 m.).....Dec. 22
13604 Jitters, the Butler—Clark & McCullough
(reissue) (20 m.).....Dec. 29

Republic—One Reel

- 4978 Sweden—This World of Ours (9 m.).....Aug. 30
4979 France—This World of Ours (9 m.).....Oct. 15
4980 Sweden—This World of Ours (9 m.).....Nov. 30

Republic—Two Reels**1949-50**

- 4984 The Invisible Monster—Serial (12 ep.)....Sept. 30
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 5081 Desperadoes of the West—Serial (12 ep.)...not set

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 3008 Football Pay-off Plays—Sports (10 m.).....Sept.
5015 If Cats Could Sing—Terrytoon (7 m.).....Sept.
5016 Little Roquefort in Mouse & Garden—
Terrytoon (7 m.).....Oct.
3009 Circus on the Campus—Sports (10 m.).....Oct.
5017 Beauty on the Beach (Mighty Mouse)—
Terrytoon (7 m.).....Oct.
7004 The Fontaine Sisters—Melody (8 m.).....Oct.
5018 Wide Open Spaces (Gandy Goose)—
Terrytoon (7 m.).....Nov.
3010 Tee Girls—Sports (10 m.).....Nov.
5019 Sour Grapes (Dingbat)—Terrytoon (7 m.)....Dec.
5020 Mother Goose's Birthday Party (Mighty Mouse)—
Terrytoon (7 m.).....Dec.

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- Vol. 16 No. 5—As Russia Sees It—
March of Time (16 m.).....Aug.
Vol. 16 No. 6—The Gathering Storm—
March of Time (17 m.).....Sept.

Universal—One Reel**1949-50**

- 5388 Feast of Songs—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)....Oct. 2
5333 Ski for Two—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)....Oct. 16
5347 Brooklyn Goes Hollywood—Variety Views
(9 m.).....Oct. 16
5348 In the Shadow of the Andes—
Variety Views (9 m.).....Oct. 23
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 6321 Life Begins for Andy Panda—Cartune
(reissue) (7 m.).....Nov. 6
6322 Three Lazy Mice—Cartune (reissue) (7 m.)....Dec. 4
6341 Battle of the Bulge—Variety View (9 m.)..Nov. 13
6351 Puny Express—Cartune (7 m.).....Nov. 13
6381 Brother John—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)...Nov. 20
6382 Peggy, Peg & Polly—Cartoon Melody (10 m.)Jan. 22

Universal—Two Reels**1949-50**

- 5358 Ready to Ride—Musical Western (25 m.)..Oct. 5
5313 Music By Martin—Musical (15 m.).....Oct. 11
5202 The Tiny Terrors Make Trouble—
Special (17 m.).....Jan. 18
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 6201 Fun at the Zoo—Special (18 m.).....Nov. 8
6301 The Harmonicats & Miguelitos Valdes' Orch.—
Musical (15 m.).....Nov. 8
6302 Jerry Gray & the Band of Today—
Musical (15 m.).....Dec. 20

Vitaphone—One Reel**1949-50**

- 6718 Canary Row—Looney Tune (7 m.).....Oct. 7
6726 Bushy Hare—Bugs Bunny (7 m.).....Nov. 11
(End of 1949-50 Season)

Beginning of 1950-51 Season

- 7502 Grandad of Races—Sports Parade (10 m.)..Sept. 2
7301 Fagin's Freshmen—B. R. Cartoon
(reissue) (7 m.).....Sept. 16
7401 So You Want a Raise—Joe McDoakes
(10 m.).....Sept. 23

7801 When Grandpa Was a Boy—

- Hit Parade (9 m.).....Oct. 7
7302 Slightly Daffy—Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)...Oct. 14
7601 Slap Happy—Novelty (10 m.).....Oct. 14
7701 Stooze for a Mouse—Merrie Melody (7 m.)..Oct. 21
7503 Paddle Your Own Canoe—
Sports Parade (10 m.).....Oct. 21
7702 Pop 'Im Pop!—Merrie Melody (7 m.).....Oct. 28
7303 The Aristo Cat—Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)..Nov. 11
7602 Those Who Dance—Novelty (10 m.).....Nov. 25
7703 Caveman Inki—Merrie Melody (7 m.).....Nov. 25
7402 So You're Going to Have an Operation—
Joe McDoakes (10 m.).....Dec. 2
7704 Dog Collared—Merrie Melody (7 m.).....Dec. 2
7304 The Unbearable Bear—Cartoon
(reissue) (7 m.).....Dec. 9
7501 Wild Water Champions—
Sports Parade (10 m.).....Dec. 9
7719 Rabbit of Seville—Bugs Bunny (7 m.).....Dec. 16
7802 The Old Family Album—Hit Parade (9 m.)..Dec. 16
7603 Blaze Busters—Novelty (10 m.).....Dec. 30
7705 Two's a Crowd—Merrie Melody (7 m.)....Dec. 30
7305 Duck Soup to Nuts—Cartoon (reissue) (7 m.)Jan. 6
7720 Hare We Go—Bugs Bunny (7 m.).....Jan. 6
7403 So You Want to Be a Handyman—
Joe McDoakes (10 m.).....Jan. 13
7504 Ski in the Sky—Sports Parade (10 m.).....Jan. 13
7604 Animal Antics—Novelty (10 m.).....Jan. 20
7706 A Fox in a Fix—Merrie Melody (7 m.)....Jan. 20

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 7001 Wish You Were Here—Special (20 m.)...July 29
7101 Wagon Wheels West—Featurette
(reissue) (20 m.).....Sept. 9
7002 Royal Rodeo—Special (20 m.).....Nov. 4
7102 Barbershop Ballads—Featurette
(reissue) (20 m.).....Nov. 18
7003 The Wanderer's Return—Special (20 m.)..Dec. 23
7103 Ace of Clubs—Featurette (reissue) (20 m.)Jan. 27

**NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK
RELEASE DATES****Paramount News**

- 26 Sat. (E)Nov. 18
27 Wed. (O)Nov. 22
28 Sat. (E)Nov. 25
29 Wed. (O)Nov. 29
30 Sat. (E)Dec. 2
31 Wed. (O)Dec. 6
32 Sat. (E)Dec. 9
33 Wed. (O)Dec. 13
34 Sat. (E)Dec. 16
35 Wed. (O)Dec. 20
36 Sat. (E)Dec. 23
37 Wed. (O)Dec. 27
38 Sat. (E)Dec. 30
39 Wed. (O)Jan. 3
40 Sat. (E)Jan. 6

Warner Pathe News

- 27 Wed. (O)Nov. 15
28 Mon. (E)Nov. 20
29 Wed. (O)Nov. 22
30 Mon. (E)Nov. 27
31 Wed. (O)Nov. 29
32 Mon. (E)Dec. 4
33 Wed. (O)Dec. 6
34 Mon. (E)Dec. 11
35 Wed. (O)Dec. 13
36 Mon. (E)Dec. 18
37 Wed. (O)Dec. 20
38 Mon. (E)Dec. 25
39 Wed. (O)Dec. 27
40 Mon. (E)Jan. 1
41 Wed. (O)Jan. 3

Fox Movietone

- 93 Friday (O) ..Nov. 17
94 Tues. (E) ...Nov. 21
95 Friday (O) ..Nov. 24
96 Tues. (E) ...Nov. 28
97 Friday (O) ..Dec. 1
98 Tues. (E) ...Dec. 5
99 Friday (O) ..Dec. 8
100 Tues. (E) ...Dec. 12
101 Friday (O) ..Dec. 15
102 Tues. (E) ...Dec. 19
103 Friday (O) ..Dec. 22
104 Tues. (E) ...Dec. 26
(End of 1950 Season)

**Beginning of 1951
Season**

- 1 Friday (O) ..Dec. 29
2 Tues. (E) ...Jan. 2
3 Friday (O) ...Jan. 5

News of the Day

- 222 Wed. (E) ...Nov. 15
223 Mon. (O) ...Nov. 20
224 Wed. (E) ...Nov. 22
225 Mon. (O) ...Nov. 27
226 Wed. (E) ...Nov. 29
227 Mon. (O) ...Dec. 4
228 Wed. (E) ...Dec. 6
229 Mon. (O) ...Dec. 11
230 Wed. (E) ...Dec. 13
231 Mon. (O) ...Dec. 18
232 Wed. (E) ...Dec. 20
233 Mon. (O) ...Dec. 25
234 Wed. (E) ...Dec. 27
235 Mon. (O) ...Jan. 1
236 Wed. (E) ...Jan. 3

Universal News

- 404 Thurs. (E) ..Nov. 16
405 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 21
406 Thurs. (E) ...Nov. 23
407 Tues. (O) ...Nov. 28
408 Thurs. (E) ..Nov. 30
409 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 5
410 Thurs. (E) ..Dec. 7
411 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 12
412 Thurs. (E) ..Dec. 14
413 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 19
414 Thurs. (E) ..Dec. 21
415 Tues. (O) ...Dec. 26
416 Thurs. (E) ..Dec. 28
417 Tues. (O) ...Jan. 2
418 Thurs. (E) ...Jan. 4

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1950

No. 47

COMPO APPROVES AMBITIOUS PROGRAM

Meeting in New York on Thursday and Friday of last week, the executive board of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations accomplished much in the way of approving a well rounded public relations program for the industry, but the main issue—that of resolving the Theatre Owners of America's demands for "fairer representation" on the COMPO board as the price for its continued membership—remained unsettled at the close of the two-day conclave.

According to reports, the TOA's demands were the subject of much heated discussion, with several of the charter members insisting that there be no change in the present COMPO set-up, but the only action taken was the designation of COMPO president Ned E. Depinet as head of a committee to meet with the TOA committee headed by Ted Gamble for a conference on the matter. It is expected that this conference will not take place for at least a week or two, pending Mr. Depinet's return to New York from a business trip.

Despite the indecisiveness of TOA's future membership in COMPO, however, the COMPO board went full speed ahead in the formulation of a program which, at the close of the meeting, was termed by Depinet as "the most ambitious year's program in industry history," one that could provide the answer to many of the industry's ills.

Among the actions taken was approval of a nation-wide "Starmaker's Contest," based on an idea broached several months ago by Leonard H. Golden-son, head of United Paramount Theatres, and recommended by COMPO's Program and Planning Committee, of which Nathan Yamins, the New England Allied leader, is chairman.

This contest provides for the eight major studios to nominate twenty-four young players (three from each studio), with six to be nominated by the independent producers, making for a total of thirty nominees. These players will be presented to the public in a series of six 10-minute shorts, with five players doing a bit in each short. The entire series of shorts will be played off by the participating theatres within a period of two months, and during the exhibition of each short the ticket buyers will be given ballots to vote for the player they like best. The winner of each short will be announced after completion of its national exhibition. Finally, a seventh short subject, made up of clips from the winners' appearances in the other shorts, will be exhibited nationally with the usual ballots provided to the movie-goers to determine the ultimate winner and the final standings of the others. As planned, the final results would be made public at a gala affair in Hollywood, patterned more or less after the Academy Awards.

It is estimated that the cost of this project, including 9,000 prints at the rate of 1,500 for each subject, ballots, music rights, radio, television, magazine and newspaper advertising and promotion, and administrative salaries, will be in the neighborhood of \$500,000. While no details were worked out for the financing of this project, it was felt that the cost could be covered easily through film rental charges for the shorts. Mr. Golden-son was appointed chairman of a committee to give further study to the plan.

Approved also was the Program and Planning Committee's recommendation for a nation-wide film festival, suggested by Max E. Youngstein, Paramount's national director of advertising and publicity. Based on the theme, "Movies March On," the plan calls for a festival period of from sixty to ninety days, during which production, distribution and exhibition will coordinate their promotional activities in connection with the best pictures each distributor has to offer, supported by a national advertising campaign.

In proposing the festival plan, Youngstein said that the idea was influenced by the 20th Century-Fox "Movies Are Better Than Ever" campaign, for which he had high praise, but he pointed out that the principal defect of that campaign was that the promotional efforts of the exhibitors were too widely scattered. Depinet appointed Youngstein to head a committee to explore the festival plan further.

Another public relations project that was taken under consideration but not voted upon was a mammoth nine-day motion picture exposition to be held around next Labor Day at the Grand Central Palace in New York City and duplicated in other key centers where desired by the local picture people. This project, suggested by Fred J. Schwartz, head of Century Theatres, would include an actual sound stage in complete work to give the public an idea of what goes into the making of a motion picture, a cross-section of a theatre, daily appearances by Hollywood stars, and different exhibits tracing the history of the industry. As outlined by Schwartz, such an exposition, in addition to being a public relations builder, could be a profit-making venture for COMPO. He figured that the receipts from admissions (60c for adults and 40c for children) and from rentals of booth space to concessionaires and numerous manufacturers of such items as clothes, shoes, theatre equipment, cosmetics, etc., can give COMPO a profit of \$91,000 over and above the cost of \$103,000 to stage the exposition. Schwartz, too, was appointed as chairman of a committee to explore further the possibilities of this plan.

The board approved also a new system of collecting dues, as proposed by Robert J. O'Donnell, COMPO's treasurer, because the present method of billing ex-

(Continued on back page)

**"Born Yesterday" with Judy Holliday,
William Holden and Broderick Crawford**

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 103 min.)

An excellent adult comedy. It should prove to be an outstanding box-office attraction, not only because of the fame of the highly successful stage play on which it is based, but also because of the favorable word-of-mouth advertising it will deservedly receive. What really puts the picture over is the brilliant performance of Judy Holliday as the beautiful but dizzy blonde "girl-friend" of an unscrupulous, uncouth multi-millionaire junk dealer, whose downfall is brought about when he makes the mistake of deciding that she needs an education. One has to see and hear Miss Holliday to fully appreciate the superb delivery of her lines and the fine shadings of her artful mannerisms. What she says and does is so uproariously funny at times that many a line of the witty dialogue is drowned out by the audience's hearty laughter. For all her dizziness, however, Miss Holliday is a sympathetic and appealing character, especially so in the last half when she learns moral and democratic values and decides to put an end to the dishonest activities of her tough boy-friend. Although none of the other players stands a chance next to Miss Holliday, highly effective performances are turned in by Broderick Crawford, as the boorish junk magnate; William Holden, as a crusading newspaperman who undertakes to educate Miss Holliday and wins her love in the process; and Howard St. John, as a conscience-stricken lawyer, who helps Crawford set up his dirty political deals. The action, which takes place in Washington, treats the spectator to an interesting tour of the capitol's historic landmarks and great monuments.

Briefly, the story has Crawford and Judy, a beautiful but incredibly ignorant ex-chorus girl, checking into a swank hotel in Washington, where Crawford had come to manipulate an international cartel in junk with the help of a crooked Senator. When the Senator comes visiting with his wife and Judy's total ignorance of social amenities results in embarrassing situations, Crawford engages Holden, an idealistic newspaperman, to put a social polish on her. Though resentful at first, Judy takes a liking to Holden and from him learns, not only the importance of speaking properly and reading worthwhile books, but also to think in terms of moral values, democratic ideals, and regard and compassion for her fellow men. She falls in love with Holden and, beginning to despise Crawford's crooked dealings, refuses to sign documents in connection with his corporations, of which she was the nominal head. Enraged, Crawford beats her up. Determined to put an end to his shady dealings, Judy helps Holden to obtain incriminating papers exposing Crawford's crookedness. Crawford's efforts to retrieve the papers through violence and bribery are unavailing, and in the end Judy leaves him for a life of marriage with Holden, promising the beaten and dejected Crawford that she will return his corporations at the rate of one a year providing he conducts himself decently.

It was produced by S. Sylvan Simon and directed by George Cukor from a screen play by Albert Mannheimer, based on the stage play by Garson Kanin.

Strictly adult fare.

**"Vendetta" with Faith Domergue,
George Dolenz and Hillary Brooke**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 84 min.)

A slow-moving, somber melodrama, one that has a depressing effect on the spectator. Being a story of revenge that deals with a primitive code of vengeance followed by the natives of Corsica in the post-Napoleonic days, it is hardly the type of entertainment that movie-goers want to see today, for it is completely cheerless and void of comedy relief. Moreover, the bleak island backgrounds, though pictorially effective, heighten the oppressive mood of the piece, and the heroine's fanatical determination to avenge her father's murder in accordance with the island's barbaric traditions verges on the morbid. The story itself is not very substantial and, despite several tense scenes, lacks an appreciable dramatic punch:—

When her father, a land arbitrator, is murdered, Faith

Domergue rightfully claims that the crime had been committed by a rival family headed by Joseph Calleia, who sought control of their Corsican town. Calleia, however, produces evidence that convinces the court that the murder was the work of Donald Buka, a political outlaw, with whom Faith was in love. Determined to extract vengeance in accordance with the island's code of "vendetta," which called for the eldest son of each family to duel to the death, Faith summons home George Dolenz, her brother, who lived in France. Dolenz, absent for ten years, arrives with Hillary Brooke, an attractive Englishwoman he planned to marry. His romance with Hillary, his acceptance of the court's verdict, and his refusal to stick by the code of "vendetta," disturbs Faith. She enlists Buka's aid and, in a daring scheme that brings the French judge and Calleia and his two sons to her home, proves to Dolenz that their father's murder had been committed by Calleia's sons. Dolenz immediately challenges the eldest son to a duel, despite Hillary's pleas that he leave the matter in the hands of the law. On the morning of the duel, Faith learns that Calleia's younger son had secretly joined his brother in an attempt to ambush Dolenz in the woods. She rushes to warn Dolenz, and in the ensuing fight she loses her life along with both of Calleia's sons. Dolenz, heartbroken, determines to devote himself to abolishing the code of "vendetta."

It was produced by Howard Hughes and directed by Mel Ferrer from a screen play by W. R. Burnett, based on the French novel, "Colombo," by Prosper Merimee.

Adult fare.

**"Watch the Birdie" with Red Skelton,
Arlene Dahl and Ann Miller**

(MGM, January; time, 70 min.)

A good slapstick comedy. Cast as a bungling photographer, a role that is suitable to his brand of clowning, Red Skelton romps through the part in a way that should delight his fans. In fact, they will get an extra dividend, for Skelton also portrays his own father and grandfather, with all three characters appearing at once by means of expert trick photography. The story, as in most slapstick comedies, is far-fetched and somewhat nonsensical, but it is fast-moving, has comical situations, and should provoke hearty laughter. One situation that will make an audience roar with laughter is where Skelton and another man, visiting a doctor's office, attempt to undress in a compartment big enough for one. There is a highly amusing and novel chase at the finish in which Skelton wildly drives a huge hydraulic lift truck as he tangles with the villains:—

Skelton, owner of a camera supply store on the verge of bankruptcy, tries to get out of debt by doing free-lance newsreel photography, but his bungling efforts always end in failure. His luck changes when he is rescued from drowning by Arlene Dahl, a wealthy young lady, with whom he falls madly in love. Arlene, feeling sorry for Skelton, instructs Leon Ames, her lawyer and business manager, to buy enough merchandise from Skelton's store to get him out of debt. She then engages Skelton to photograph the groundbreaking ceremonies in connection with a huge housing project financed by her. In the course of the assignment, Skelton unwittingly photographs Ames and a building inspector and records on the sound track their crooked scheme to make the housing project a failure for their personal gain. When the film is developed and shown to Arlene, the recording of Ames' conversation comes out backwards. Ames sets out to steal the film before Skelton can correct the condition, and engages Ann Miller, a sexy beauty, to accomplish the robbery, but her efforts fail. Eventually, Skelton learns of the crooked scheme and informs Arlene. Just as they prepare to go to the district attorney, Arlene and Skelton are captured by Ames and his confederate, who threaten their lives. But Skelton, in his bungling way, manages to gain his and Arlene's freedom and, after a hectic chase, delivers the criminals to the police.

It was produced by Harry Ruskin and directed by Jack Donohue from a screen play by Ivan Tors, Devery Freeman and Mr. Ruskin, based on a story by Marshall Neilan, Jr.

Fine for the family.

"Double Crossbones" with Donald O'Connor and Helena Carter

(Univ.-Int'l, January; time, 76 min.)

Although it has been given a fancy production dress and Technicolor photography, this comedy about the misadventures of a would-be pirate in Colonial days has little to recommend it. At best, it may prove amusing to the youngsters. The story is complicated and rambling, the situations trite, and the comedy, which is preponderantly slapstick, is too forced to be genuinely funny. Donald O'Connor, a talented young comedian, works hard to make something of his role, but the inept script and its unimaginative handling are too much for him to overcome:—

Employed as clerks in a shop in Charleston, O'Connor and Will Geer are arrested when they inadvertently discover that their employer is actually a fence for pirate loot obtained by John Emery, the English governor. They escape from the gendarmes and purchase passage on a ship captained by Charles McGraw. At sea, they learn that they are on a pirate ship and that McGraw planned to toss them overboard. But when O'Connor suddenly develops a rash, the pirates think that it is the dreaded pox and jump overboard themselves, leaving O'Connor and Geer in sole possession of the ship. Seeking aid from a passing merchant ship, O'Connor fires a cannon and accidentally shoots off its main mast. The captain, believing himself attacked by pirates, surrenders his ship to O'Connor, who acts the part of a bloodthirsty pirate when he notices Emery among the passengers. He demands the release of a number of men held for debtors prison, and they gladly become his crew. O'Connor then heads for the island of Tortuga, a pirate rendezvous, where he is welcomed into an organization of famed pirate leaders. In the events that follow, O'Connor learns that Helena Carter, the Governor's ward, was being forced into a loveless marriage with her crooked guardian. He sails back to Charleston to go to her aid and, after many complications, including a battle between Emery's forces and O'Connor's pirate friends, it all ends with Emery's death and with O'Connor winning Helena for himself.

It was produced by Leonard Goldstein and directed by Charles T. Barton from a story and screen play by Oscar Brodney.

Harmless for the family.

"Mystery Submarine" with Marta Toren and Macdonald Carey

(Univ.-Int'l, December; time, 78 min.)

Even if one accepts the fact that the story is extremely far-fetched, "Mystery Submarine" shapes up as no more than a routine, mildly interesting spy melodrama. It is rather slow-moving and lacking in action for a picture of this type. Moreover, the flashback method of presenting the story serves to diminish the suspense, for one knows in advance that the principals had overcome the dangers they face. The most interesting and exciting parts of the picture are where the submarine, a renegade U-Boat supported by hostile foreign powers, undergoes depth charge attacks by the U. S. Navy. The direction is just fair, and the acting, considering the stereotyped characterizations, passable. All in all, it does not rise above the level of program fare:—

The story opens at a Government hearing with Marta Toren, a widow and naturalized citizen of German origin, charged with treason for having attempted to deliver Ludwig Donath, a famed refugee scientist, into enemy hands. Under questioning, Marta reveals that, while employed as a secretary to a wealthy family entertaining Donath as a house guest, she had been approached by Robert Douglas, who had identified himself as the commander of the U-Boat in which her husband died when it was reportedly sunk. Douglas, informing her that the U-Boat was secretly in operation and that her husband was still alive, had tricked her into aiding an elaborate scheme whereby the family yacht had been boarded by the submarine's crew and blown to bits after she and Donath had been taken prisoner. She then learned that her husband was dead, and that she had been used as a dupe to get Donath, who was to be delivered to an enemy power.

Macdonald Carey next takes the stand and reveals that the Navy, after establishing that the yacht had been destroyed by a U-Boat torpedo, had assigned him to track it down because of his ability to speak German. He had located the sub in a cove along the South American coast and, after allowing the crew to take him prisoner, had become one of them by proving that he was an escaped U-Boat medical officer. He had learned the location at which Donath was to be transferred to another ship but Douglas had discovered his true identity before he could transmit the information, and had put him under guard. Under his (Carey's) instructions, Marta had released one of the submarine's flares, enabling naval units to locate and attack it with depth bombs. And when Douglas had ordered debris sent to the surface to make it appear as if the sub had been destroyed, Carey had painted a message on a life preserver. This was found by the Navy and ultimately brought about their rescue and the sinking of the sub when it kept the rendezvous with the transfer vessel. Convinced that Marta's heroism in releasing the flare made the rescue possible, the hearing board drops the charges against her.

It was produced by Ralph Dietrich and directed by Douglas Sirk from a story and screenplay by George W. George and George F. Slavin.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Dallas" with Gary Cooper, Ruth Roman and Raymond Massey

(Warner Bros., Dec. 30; time, 94 min.)

This Technicolor western undoubtedly will prove to be a fairly successful box-office attraction because of the popularity of the stars and of the above-average production values. But judged solely on the merits of the screen story, it is only a fair entertainment, with an appeal mostly to those who are partial to western melodramas regardless of story values, so long as there are plenty of chases, hard riding, gun battles and fistcuffs. Those who demand something more than fast movement will find that the picture is hampered by a plot that wanders all over the lot to a point where it becomes so muddled that one doesn't know what it is all about. Another defect is that the many characterizations are not clearly defined. As the fearless, quick-on-the-trigger hero of the piece, Gary Cooper handles the role in his usual expert manner. The romantic interest is of the usual triangle variety:—

Set in the post-Civil War days, the story has Cooper, a Confederate colonel wanted by the Government for guerrilla activities, heading toward Dallas for a showdown with Raymond Massey, Steve Cochran and Zon Murray, three brothers who had ruined his family and fortune in Georgia. En route Cooper meets Lief Erickson, a fopishly dressed Bostonian just appointed U. S. Marshal, who was headed for Dallas to take up his duties and to marry Ruth Roman, daughter of Antonio Moreno, owner of the largest ranch in the vicinity. Cooper convinces Erickson that it would be advantageous for them to switch identities, and upon their arrival in Dallas he finds himself attracted to Erickson's girl. With Cooper masquerading as the Marshal in Erickson's fancy clothes, the evil brothers fail to recognize him and continue a scheme to fleece Moreno of his cattle and lands. Cooper, waiting his chance at revenge, plays the brothers against each other and eventually kills Murray when he attempts to ambush him. In the complicated events that follow, the two remaining brothers discover who Cooper really is and, in a gun fight, Cooper kills Cochran. Massey, after notifying the authorities that Cooper is a fugitive and seeing to it that he is put in jail, invades Moreno's ranch home and threatens to kill Ruth unless her father raises \$25,000 for him at once. Meanwhile Cooper escapes from jail and traces Massey to the ranch. There, he subdues him and turns him over to a posse. It ends with Cooper gaining a pardon for aiding the law, with his winning Ruth's love, and with Erickson graciously stepping out of their lives.

It was produced by Anthony Veiller and directed by Stuart Heisler from a screen play by John Twist.

Unobjectionable morally.

hibitors on a monthly basis is proving impractical. Under the new system, the exhibitors dues will continue to be based on the formula of one-tenth of one per cent of his film rentals, but instead of the billings being based on current film rentals they will be based on the rentals paid during the 1949 calendar year, with the exhibitor given the option of paying quarterly, semi-annually or annually during the ensuing year. In other words, the dues for 1950 will be based on the 1949 film rentals, and the 1951 dues will be based on the 1950 film rentals. Payment of dues is, of course, voluntary, and all monies collected from the exhibitors will be matched dollar for dollar by the distributors.

Other actions taken by the board included:

Approval of a revised Motion Picture Industry Council plan for cooperation with the Government in the production of films connected with the defense effort.

Authorization to Depinet to appoint a permanent legislative committee to function on a national level in connection with all legislation affecting the industry, and to help out on the local level wherever invited to do so.

Approval to proceed without delay on the holding of industry seminars.

Authorization to Depinet to name a delegate to the Mid-Century Youth Conference at the White House.

Authorization to the research committee to work out details of a survey to be conducted by theatre managers on the attitudes of theatre patrons on such subjects as admission prices, the conduct of stars, the length of features, early or late shows, etc.

Adoption of a press relations plan to insert thirteen full-page institutional advertisements in *Editor & Publisher* to acquaint newspapermen with the economic and cultural importance of American motion pictures.

Authorization to Arthur L. Mayer, COMPO's executive vice-president, to negotiate with the Association of Motion Picture Fan Magazines to come into COMPO as an associate member without voting privileges.

Adoption of a resolution offered by a group of Texas exhibitors calling for COMPO to work toward elimination of inequities in the Federal excise tax laws on admissions for children and soldiers, so that the admission tax hereafter will be based on the actual ticket prices and not on the normal adult admissions.

The two-day meeting of COMPO's executive board has been a fruitful one, for out of it has come a public relations program that is indeed progressive and certainly vital at this time. But this program, to be effective, requires a united industry front.

There is no dodging the fact that today, with our public relations at a low point, and with the competition from free home television becoming more formidable with each passing week, the motion picture industry is at a crossroads and its future will be determined by the course it now adopts.

Fortunately, the combined industry has in COMPO's leadership men of experience, integrity and tact who are willingly giving of their valuable time to guide the industry on a proper course, formulating programs that are designed to enable the industry to develop to its largest capacity to the ultimate benefit of every branch. Their work, however, is being retarded and COMPO's growth stunted because of the fact that the TOA issue remains unresolved.

There is some talk to the effect that COMPO is prepared to continue functioning without TOA as a member. This, of course, is possible, but it certainly is not desirable, first, because it will materially reduce COMPO's strength and prestige as an "all-industry" organization, and secondly, because the lack of financial support from a theatre organization as vast as TOA will leave COMPO with funds that will be insufficient to carry out a successful, worthwhile public relations program.

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not suggest that the other members of COMPO bow to TOA's demands at any cost, but it does urge that both sides make a speedy and sincere attempt to iron out their differences on a fair and equitable basis. So long as the TOA's demands do not have the effect of putting COMPO under its influence and domination, there should be no difficulty in arriving at an amicable agreement. And the sooner such an agreement is reached the better, for the industry can no longer afford to delay the important work of COMPO.

"Experiment Alcatraz" with John Howard and Joan Dixon

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 58 min.)

A minor program murder melodrama that will just about squeeze by on the lower half of a mid-week double bill. The story is poorly written, the action is developed in an artificial manner, and matters are not helped much by the performances, which are unconvincing, mainly because of the inept dialogue. The action arouses a spark of excitement here and there, but this is not enough to hold one interested in the proceedings:—

To test a new radioactive isotope in treating radiation victims, five Alcatraz convicts volunteer for treatment, with the understanding that they will be set free when the experiment is over. While the convicts are apparently sleeping under the effects of the treatment, one of them, Robert Shayne, snatches a pair of scissors dropped by Joan Dixon, a nurse, and fatally stabs Sam Scar, the convict in the adjoining bed. Shayne, at the subsequent investigation, insists that he does not recall the killing and that he and Scar were close pals. As a result, the treatment is declared unreliable, and Joan is relieved of her duties for carelessness. John Howard, the doctor who invented the isotope, refuses to believe that it could possibly make a patient violent, and decides to investigate. He visits Shayne, now owner of a prosperous gambling joint, and asks for his cooperation, but the ex-convict refuses and has Howard beaten by thugs when he persists. Together with Joan, Howard goes to Alcatraz to check on the backgrounds of Shayne and Scar, and finds a clue that leads them to Lynne Carter, Scar's step-daughter, a cashier in a Lake Tahoe cafe. There, Howard is beaten and finally killed by Shayne when he discovers that Lynne is Shayne's wife, and that she and Shayne had planned her step-father's murder to obtain possession of \$250,000 in stolen cash. Upon Howard's death, Joan, working with Walter Kingsford, an army doctor, sets a clever trap that unmasks Shayne as a wilful killer and proves Howard's isotope a success.

It was produced and directed by Edward L. Cahn from a screen play by Orville H. Hampton, based on another screen play by George W. George and George F. Slavin.

Adult fare.

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LET US STOP DAWDLING

One year and three months have slipped by since some sixty delegates representing all branches of the motion picture industry met in Chicago for the purpose of formulating a public relations program that would raise the motion picture to a position of esteem as the greatest medium yet devised for entertainment and education, and would win for the industry the good will of the American people. Through such a program, it was hoped to stimulate public interest in motion pictures so that our industry could grow stronger and more prosperous.

Three and one-half months after the meeting in Chicago, a committee representing the ten industry groups involved in this undertaking met in Washington, D. C., and formed COMPO (the Council of Motion Picture Organizations), thus achieving, according to the statement handed out at that time, "the individual and joint purposes of the members of the Chicago Conference to establish a national policy-making authority to plan, organize and supervise a comprehensive, continuous public relations program representing maximum co-ordination of the member organizations which represent all branches of the motion picture industry."

But five more months slipped by before the ten charter member groups that comprise COMPO ratified the actions taken by their delegates in Washington, and thus the new all-industry organization was not launched officially until early in May of this year—eight months after the urgent call to arms in Chicago.

In the meantime, a special COMPO Committee on Taxation and Legislation, under the chairmanship of Abram F. Myers, Allied's general counsel, carried on a most effective campaign to rid the industry of the burdensome Federal tax on admissions, an effort that did not succeed only because of the emergency created by the war in Korea.

In the seven months that have passed since COMPO was established officially, there have been numerous meetings by different COMPO committees that were appointed to study the different phases of the unified public relations program, and the recommendations of these committees were duly considered and voted upon at the several meetings held by COMPO's executive board.

Yet, for all these meetings, and for all the careful study that has been given to the aims and purposes of COMPO, here it is December of 1950—fully fifteen months since COMPO was first conceived in Chicago—and the work of the organization insofar as it relates to public relations is still in the talking stage.

If there had been a vast improvement in business since the meeting in Chicago in August, 1949, one might be inclined to forgive the slow progress made by COMPO, but with business on a steady decline, and with today's box-office receipts sharply below what they were in 1949, COMPO's failure to get into action with a positive public relations program is indeed a sad disappointment, particularly because of the time and effort that has been expended.

For a contrast in attitudes and action when faced with a drop in business, the motion picture industry can take a lesson from the television industry, as weekly *Variety* so aptly pointed out in this week's issue in commenting upon the current advertising campaign of the American Television Dealers and Manufacturers.

The article points out that the dealers and manufacturers of television sets found that, with the approach of the Christmas season, when their sales of TV sets should be best, they were faced with a serious loss in business because of three factors: (1) The controversy over TV color broad-

casts, which has caused many a potential buyer to hold off on the purchase of a black-and-white receiving set lest it become obsolete; (2) the drastic Government-regulated credit restrictions on time-payment purchases; and (3) the imposition of the new excise taxes on TV sets.

To combat these factors, the ATDM held an emergency meeting and, within ten days, raised \$2,000,000 to launch a vast institutional advertising campaign extolling the advantages of television and its beneficial effect on family life, with full-page ads appearing in 1,100 newspapers throughout the country, and with radio commercials broadcast over 250 key radio stations.

Aside from the fact that the first advertisement was in bad taste and was roundly condemned by parents, educators, newspaper editors and others as stooping to a new low in advertising because of the copy's negative fear appeal, the fact remains that the TV set manufacturers and dealers wasted no time in taking cooperative action to overcome a crisis that threatened to hurt their business.

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not know how much money is invested in the companies that are members of the group calling itself the American Television Dealers and Manufacturers, but it is quite confident that their combined investment does not come anywhere near the approximate three billion dollars invested in the motion picture industry. Yet that group, when faced with a crisis, speedily raised \$2,000,000 to combat that crisis with a large-scale cooperative campaign, while the motion picture industry, despite its greater investment and vaster resources, is still lagging along with an undeveloped all-industry organization that is short of funds and that is without a concrete accomplishment fifteen months after it was first conceived for the purpose of proceeding with plans to protect and safeguard the business.

And what is even more disheartening is that, after all these months, COMPO's growth remains stunted and its progress retarded because of differences within the organization, caused by the Theatre Owners of America's demands for a reorganization of the COMPO set-up so that it will have greater representation on the COMPO executive board.

Just how much time will elapse before the TOA-COMPO dispute will be resolved, if ever, is any one's guess, but in view of the fact that any change in the COMPO set-up will require extensive deliberations, not only by the COMPO board, but also by the boards of directors of the different groups that make up COMPO, many more months may slip by before the issue is settled.

The motion picture business, however, cannot afford to waste any more time on intramural differences. Hardly a day goes by without an announcement from some territory about theatre closings due to poor business, and in the face of such a condition it should become obvious to all who have the industry's welfare at heart that the time has come for acts and deeds rather than conversation.

COMPO was conceived in Chicago in a spirit of unity and sincerity that surprised even the most skeptical industry leader present, and this was accomplished at a time when the need to work together in the common interest was great. That need is even greater now, and the industry leaders, instead of quibbling over the division of power in COMPO, should follow through on the unanimity that prevailed when the organization was born. They must, without further delay, rise to their responsibilities with courage and with all the financial and other resources within their control in a united effort to assure, not only the industry's survival, but also its progress.

"The Goldbergs" with Gertrude Berg

(Paramount, January; time, 83 min.)

"The Goldbergs," based on the highly popular radio-television program of the same name, comes to the screen as an exceptionally good human comedy-drama, one that is as heartwarming as it is funny. Dealing with the affairs of a Bronx Jewish family, their friends and neighbors, the comedy is provoked and the human interest awakened by the natural, realistic way in which the simple story is developed. Moreover, all the characters are likeable and sympathetic. As on the radio and TV programs, the pivotal character is "Molly Goldberg," the sagacious wife and mother played by Gertrude Berg, who is excellent in the part. All the other players are fine, too, acting with realism and feeling:—

When Molly learns from Philip Loeb, her husband, that Eduard Franz, her former suitor, is in town, she invites him to a family dinner. Franz, a middle-aged prosperous bachelor, brings along Barbara Rush, his intended bride, a beautiful girl many years his junior. Molly privately frowns upon the May-December romance, but she insists that Barbara remain as her house guest to prepare for the wedding. Meanwhile Franz offers to help Loeb establish himself as a dress manufacturer if he will give up his work as a contractor. Complications arise when Barbara, through Molly, meets and falls in love with Peter Hanson, a young music teacher. Franz blames Molly for disrupting his intended marriage and, angered and hurt, he breaks relations with the family and withdraws the support he promised to Loeb, a move that results in Loeb finding himself in considerable financial difficulties. Unabashed by this turn of events, Molly goes to see Franz and convinces him that the break-up of his romance with Barbara was to the best interests of both of them. Franz establishes relations with the family once again and Molly shrewdly steers him into a more suitable romance with Helen Brown, a young widow next door. Eventually, through Molly's well-meaning manipulations, the problems of all concerned are resolved happily with Franz marrying Helen, Barbara announcing her engagement to Hanson, and Loeb's business troubles overcome.

It was produced by Mel Epstein and directed by Walter Hart from a screen play by Gertrude Berg and N. Richard Nash. The cast includes Eli Mintz, Larry Robinson, Arlene McQuade and others who appear with Miss Berg on the TV show.

Fine family entertainment.

"Frenchie" with Joel McCrea, Shelley Winters and Paul Kelly

(Univ.-Int'l, January; time, 81 min.)

Bolstered by an impressive cast, this Technicolor western should go over pretty well with most movie-goers, in spite of the fact that the plot follows an obvious pattern that will not tax anyone's mind. Joel McCrea, as a fearless sheriff, and Paul Kelly, as leader of the lawless element, provide the film with the usual slambang ingredients demanded by the avid action fans, while Shelley Winters, as the sultry operator of a plush gambling hall, furnishes enough glamour and punchy dialogue to satisfy the other customers. Worked into the gusty proceedings are some good comedy touches and a romantic triangle:—

Accompanied by Elsa Lanchester, her partner, Shelley, famous operator of a New Orleans gambling house, returns to the frontier town of Bottleneck to avenge the death of her father, who had been murdered by two business associates fifteen years previously. Shelley knew that one of the murderers was Paul Kelly, who now operated a gambling joint in a neighboring town, but the identity of the other murderer was unknown to her. Her first move is to by a defunct saloon, which she turns into a lavish gambling emporium with pretty women dealers. She then proceeds to ruin Kelly's business by winning over his customers, McCrea, the sheriff, keeps a close eye on Shelley to make sure that she remains within the law, and in due time she falls in love with him and reveals her motive in returning to town. The town's

solid citizens, led by John Emery, the local banker, are furious over the influx of undesirables attracted by Shelley's operation, but she shrewdly beats back their efforts to pass an anti-gambling law. In the complicated events that follow, Shelley learns that Emery is the unknown man who had helped murder her father, and that he was still a silent partner to Kelly. Before she can move against Emery, however, he is murdered mysteriously under circumstances that point the finger of suspicion on McCrea, because Marie Windsor, Emery's wife, was his former sweetheart. McCrea, in turn, suspects Shelley. The mystery is finally cleared up when Marie, to save McCrea from a lynching, confesses that she had killed her husband. Meanwhile word comes that Kelly and his henchmen were headed for town to take over Shelley's gambling joint by force. McCrea stops the attack and, in a final gun duel, disposes of Kelly. With law and order restored, McCrea and Shelley plan to marry.

It was produced by Michael Kraike and directed by Louis King from a story and screen play by Oscar Brodney. The cast includes George Cleveland, John Russell, Regis Toomey and others.

Adult fare.

"The Mudlark" with Irene Dunne, Alec Guinness and Andrew Ray

(20th Century-Fox, January; time, 99 min.)

Made by 20th Century-Fox in England, "The Mudlark" is a heart-warming tale about a ragged urchin, whose invasion of Windsor Castle because of his strong desire to see Queen Victoria creates an incident that almost results in a national crisis. The picture rates high praise for its production quality, direction and acting, and its mixture of comedy, human interest and some excitement should have wide appeal. Discriminating audiences in particular should enjoy the meaningful dialogue. The action fans, however, may find it much too talky and slow-moving to suit their tastes. Andrew Ray, as the inquisitive urchin, is outstanding in his part. The scene where he and the Queen finally meet will tug at one's heartstrings. Irene Dunne is dignified as the Queen, and Alec Guinness is distinguished and eloquent as Disraeli. An appealing and highly amusing characterization is turned in by Finlay Currie as the Queen's man servant, an outspoken Scotsman who enjoys his drink:—

Andrew, an orphaned 10-year-old waif who eked out an existence from scrap objects he found on the muddy banks of the Thames, finds a cheap plaque of Queen Victoria and, because she looked motherly, feels a strong urge to see her. He goes to Windsor Castle and, in the fog, stumbles into an open coal chute and lands in the cellar. Discovered in the castle, the youngster is suspected of being connected with Irish plotters in a scheme to harm the Queen and, despite his protests that he merely wanted to see the Queen, he is arrested and placed in the Tower of London. The Queen, who for fifteen years since the death of her husband had been leading a life of voluntary seclusion, refuses to see the lad. The newspapers play up the story of the lad's imprisonment, with the result that the Irish party in the House of Commons, resenting the false implication that the Irish were involved in a plot against the Queen, uses its numerical strength to block a program of social reform introduced by the government. Disraeli, however, seizes on Andrew's case as a symbol of the plight of underprivileged children in England, and his oratory succeeds in selling the House on the needed social reforms. Young Andrew becomes a national hero, and Disraeli places him in the care of two school teachers. But the youngster, still determined to see the Queen, breaks away from his guardians and invades the castle once again. This time the Queen consents to see him. Deeply touched by their meeting, she agrees to come out of her life of seclusion to appear in public.

Nunnally Johnson wrote the screen play and produced it, based on the novel by Theodore Bonnet. It was directed by Jean Negulesco.

Excellent for the family.

**"Highway 301" with Steve Cochran,
Virginia Grey and Gaby Andre**

(Warner Bros., Jan. 13; time, 83 min.)

A tense crime melodrama. Given a semi-documentary treatment, the story is supposedly a factual account of the rise and fall of the notorious Tri-State gang, which carried on a series of sensational holdups and murders in Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina. Despite its factual basis, however, the story has all the earmarks of a conventional gangster-film plot, with the chief points of excitement being the reenactment of the gangsters' daring crimes, their escapes, and their eventual capture by the police. It is a swiftly-paced film, with the usual crime-does-not-pay lesson, and should give ample satisfaction to those who go in for pictures of this type. The title, incidentally, has no connection whatever with the story:—

Aided by four henchmen (Robert Webber, Wally Cassell, Richard Egan and Edward Norris), Steve Cochran, a sadistic and ruthless gangster, masterminds a series of daring bank robberies, during which several murders are committed. Their bold exploits alert the police of three states, but under Cochran's shrewd direction the gang manages to elude capture. Aline Towne, Cochran's girl-friend, fears that he will be caught, and when she becomes tipsy one day and talks too much about the gang's affairs to Gaby Andre, Webber's new girl-friend, Cochran kills her. In the events that follow, Webber is slain by the police, following which Cochran decides to make Gaby his girl-friend. The terror-stricken girl refuses to have anything to do with him and, when she attempts to escape, Cochran shoots her down and leaves her for dead. Later, he learns that he only wounded her, and that she was in a hospital with a good chance of survival. To stop her from talking to the police, Cochran, aided by Egan and by Virginia Grey, Egan's wife, goes to the hospital to finish Gaby. The police, however, are prepared for such a move, and trap them when they arrive at the hospital. Using several nurses as shields, Cochran and Egan make a daring escape from the hospital, but their freedom is short-lived when, with the police in hot pursuit, they die in a crash of their getaway car.

It was produced by Bryan Foy and written and directed by Andrew Stone.

Adult fare.

**"The Great Missouri Raid" with Wendell Corey,
Macdonald Carey and Ellen Drew**

(Paramount, February; time, 85 min.)

A good big-scale Western, photographed in Technicolor. The story purports to show how Frank and Jesse James and their pals, the Younger brothers, became outlaws through force of circumstances. Just what license, if any, has been taken with historical facts, this reviewer does not know; nevertheless, the action is fast-moving, exciting and interesting all the way through. It should more than satisfy those who go in for melodramas of this type, for it has more than a fair share of thrills in the way of gun battles, bank and train robberies and chases. The production, direction, photography and acting are first-rate:—

The story has Wendell Corey, as Frank James, Macdonald Carey, as Jesse James, and Bruce Bennett and Bill Williams, as the Younger brothers, deciding to give up their guerrilla activities at the close of the Civil War when they are offered amnesty under a Presidential proclamation. They make arrangements with Ward Bond, a Union Army major, for an honorable surrender, but Bond, embittered because his brother had died in an altercation with the James gang, sees to it that a drunken lot of cavalry troopers ambush the gang as they ride into town under a flag of truce. They manage to escape, but Bond determines to have his revenge and proceeds to make all members of the gang the subject of a relentless pursuit. He sets fire to their barns and homes, and even cripples Anne Revere, the mother of the James boys, by throwing a bomb into her house. The James boys

kill several of the soldiers in self defense and, as a result, are forced into outlawry. They commit many spectacular train and bank robberies, and in the course of events Jesse marries Ellen Drew while Frank weds Lois Chartrand. Meanwhile Bond retires from the army, establishes a detective agency, and is retained by the Bankers' Association to capture the James gang. The gang in turn makes a specialty of robbing banks protected by Bond's agency. In due time Bond succeeds in either capturing or killing most of the gang, but the James boys continue to elude him. Frank eventually reforms, but Jesse elects to continue his outlaw career. Ellen pleads with Jesse to give up his maulauding and to leave Missouri to start with her anew. He finally gives in to her pleadings but, before they can depart, one of Jesse's own henchmen, secretly in league with Bond, kills him for the reward.

It was produced by Nat Holt and directed by Gordon Douglas from a story and screen play by Frank Gruber. The cast includes Edgar Buchanan, Barry Kelley and others.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"For Heaven's Sake" with Clifton Webb,
Joan Bennett, Robert Cummings
and Edmund Gwenn**

(20th Century-Fox, December; time, 92 min.)

This is an imaginative and amusing fantasy, dealing with two mature angels who come down from heaven to help a child angel get born to a couple who are too busy to consider having children. Utilizing the "Here Comes Mr. Jordan" idea and treatment, the story has many comical situations, some of which are highly hilarious. Clifton Webb, as one of the angels, is vastly amusing, particularly when, to accomplish his mission, he materializes as a Texas rancher and acts and talks like Gary Cooper. There is high comedy in Webb's unangelic behavior as a mortal when temptation presents itself in the form of Joan Blondell, causing no end of consternation to Edmund Gwenn, the other angel, who had been assigned to keep an eye on Webb. For all its comical moments, however, the picture as a whole probably will be received with mixed reaction because of its fantasy theme. Childen in particular will no doubt be puzzled by the action in which the heavenly messengers mix with mortals but cannot be seen by them.

Briefly, the story has Webb and Gwenn descending to Earth to aid Gigi Perreau, a child angel, who for seven years had been waiting to be born to Robert Cummings, a playwright, and his wife Joan Bennett, an actress. Both were so wrapped up in their theatre work that they refused to consider having children. When Webb overhears Cummings say that he needed a backer for his next show, he decides to materialize as a human being—a wealthy rancher. He manages to meet Cummings and Joan, and becomes their house guest when he expresses an interest in the theatre and indicates that he might be willing to invest. Cummings also invites as a house guest Joan Blondell, a close friend, and asks her to use her charms on Webb to induce him to back the show. From then on the story deals with the numerous escapades experienced by Webb as he tries to resist the temptations of Miss Blondell's charms, and as he attempts to set up a romantic atmosphere that would induce Cummings and his wife to start thinking about babies. Among other things, he gets into a scrap with Jack La Rue, Miss Blondell's jealous boy-friend; innocently wins a \$10,000 wager and goes on a lavish spree while shadowed by a suspicious internal revenue agent; and ends up in the psychiatric ward at Bellevue when he becomes intoxicated and insists that he is an angel. It all ends on a happy note, however, when Webb's superior in heaven forgives his indiscretions, and when Cummings and Joan are blessed with a baby daughter.

It was produced by William Perlberg and directed by George Seaton, who wrote the screen play from a play by Harry Segall.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The Bandit Queen" with Barbara Britton and Philip Reed

(Lippert, December 1; time, 68 min.)

A fairly good program melodrama. William Berke's direction is effective, for the action keeps the spectator's eyes glued to the screen. There is considerable human interest in many of the situations, and the spectator follows attentively the efforts of the heroine to avenge the death of her parents. Barbara Britton, as the masked, whip-cracking heroine, is very good, and Philip Reed, although he is not given much to do as a Robin Hood type of outlaw, is pleasant. The story takes place in the lawless days following the discovery of gold in California. The photography is clear:—

When Barton MacLane, at the head of a gang, raids her family's hacienda and murders her parents, Barbara, witnessing the atrocity at a distance, takes refuge in the San Sebastian Mission, under the protection of Martin Garralga, the priest. There she meets Reed, who was sought by the authorities for aiding the Spaniards who were overtaken by the government and driven from their homes by greedy Americans. Barbara goes to the Sheriff's office to report the murders and is shocked to discover that the sheriff is none other than MacLane. Concealing her identity, she pretends to be a visitor from the East, seeking friends. She is introduced to Willard Parker, the regional attorney and real leader of the gang, who planned to set up an empire in California. Reed teaches Barbara how to use a bullwhip, and she eventually organizes a band of Spaniards to avenge the murder of her parents and to aid the oppressed. Wearing a mask and dressed as a cabellero, Barbara, known as "Zara," raids the many haciendas taken away by Parker's gunmen, recovers the gold they had stolen, and returns it to the rightful owners; and, when she comes across one of the gang who had murdered her parents, she has him hanged and deposits his body on MacLane's doorstep. Unaware that she is "Zara," Parker proposes marriage to Barbara and reveals his ambitious plans to her, thus disclosing that he was the man behind the murders and robberies. With this information on hand, Barbara steps up her secret activities, but Parker eventually learns the truth and sets out to capture her, as well as Reed and the priest. All are saved, however, but the timely arrival of the military, sent by the governor to restore order. Parker and MacLane are removed from office, and Barbara and Reed, after being married at the mission, are permitted to ride away.

It was produced and directed by William Berke from a screen play by Victor West and Budd Lesser, based on a story by Mr. West.

Good for the family.

"The Killer That Stalked New York" with Evelyn Keyes and Charles Korvin

(Columbia, December; time, 76 min.)

Seventy-six minutes of decided unpleasantness, for it deals with a smallpox epidemic. Because of the fact that the picture has been produced, directed and acted with skill, the horror most patrons will feel while watching the action will be more intense. In the opinion of this critic, there is no reason why a picture based on such a harrowing and grisly theme should have been produced. In addition to the unpleasantness of seeing a horrible disease take effect, the picture offends good taste in another way: it is clearly implied that a sister had illicit relations with her sister's husband. Before booking the picture, an exhibitor should see it for himself to determine whether it is entertainment or a nightmare:—

Arriving from Miami with smuggled diamonds from Miami, Evelyn Keyes telephones Charles Korvin, her husband in New York, to inform him that she had mailed the gems to him. She reaches New York feeling ill, unaware that she was a victim of smallpox. She telephones Korvin, who was secretly living with Lola Albright, her sister, and

for this reason he advises her to hide out at a hotel for several days. Treasury agents trail her to the hotel, but she manages to elude them. Ill, she collapses on the street and is taken to a clinic, where William Bishop, the doctor, gives her a sedative but fails to recognize her ailment. In the events that follow, Evelyn learns that Korvin had disappeared with the diamonds and that he had been carrying on an affair with her sister, Lola, deserted by Korvin, commits suicide. Enraged, Evelyn determines to track down Korvin to avenge both herself and Lola. Meanwhile a child Evelyn had embraced in the clinic comes down with smallpox, and Bishop establishes that Evelyn is the carrier of the disease. An intense police search is started for her, while she in turn continues to hunt for Korvin, innocently endangering everyone she contacts. To protect New York's millions, the health officials resort to mass vaccinations. Evelyn eventually trails Korvin to the shop of Art Smith, a gem-cutter and fence for stolen goods, arriving just as Korvin strangles Smith to death in an argument. She holds Korvin at bay at the point of a gun and telephones the police. Korvin, attempting to escape, falls to his death from a high window ledge. Evelyn, now aware that she is a carrier of smallpox, crawls out on the ledge to commit suicide, but Bishop shows up in time to persuade her to desist.

It was produced by Robert Cohn and directed by Earl McEvoy from a screen play by Harry Essex, based on a Cosmopolitan Magazine article by Milton Lehman.

Strictly adult fare.

"Joe Palooka in the Squared Circle" with Joe Kirkwood, Jr. and James Gleason

(Monogram, Nov. 5; time, 64 min.)

As good as most of the pictures in this series. As in all of them, there is an exciting, well-staged boxing bout at the finish, and as always it holds the spectator in suspense even though he knows that the hero will win. The story, which has Joe Kirkwood, Jr., as "Palooka," involved in a murder, has been developed in an interesting way and holds one's attention throughout. It should give ample satisfaction to the action fans:—

Hearing shoes and seeing two men run out of the woods, Kirkwood and John Merrick, his trainer, find the body of a murdered gambler. They notify the police, but the body disappears by the time they arrive. In the absence of the corpse, the district attorney drops the investigation, but charges of murder are placed against Greg McClure and William Haade when Kirkwood identifies them from police photographs. The two murderers alibi their way out of the charges and, once released, they determine to kill Kirkwood and Merrick to stop them from searching for the missing body. They kill Merrick and send threats to Kirkwood, but the champ is undaunted. Robert Coogan (as Humphrey) joins the search and fishes the missing body from a lake. Haade and McClure go into hiding. Meanwhile Dan Seymour, their gangster boss, contacts James Gleason, Kirkwood's manager, and offers to dispose of Haade and McClure if Kirkwood will throw his forthcoming championship fight with Hal Fieberling, on whom Seymour had bet heavily. Gleason refuses. On the night of the fight, Seymour kidnaps Gleason and sends Robert Griffin to Kirkwood's dressing room with a phony message that he had been sent there by Gleason to take care of him until Gleason arrives. During the fight, Griffin dazes Kirkwood by dousing his face with a doped sponge. Fieberling is winning the fight until Gleason manages to escape and reach the ring. He disposes of Griffin, counteracts the drug, and thus revives Kirkwood in time to win the battle. Back in his dressing room, Kirkwood is attacked by McClure, but the champ is able to best him. He then leaves with Lois Hall, his wife, on a vacation.

Hal E. Chester produced it, and Reginald Le Borg directed it, from a screen play by Jan Jeffrey and a story by B. F. Melzer, based on the comic strip by Ham Fisher.

Suitable for the family.

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NSS ANTI-TRUST SUIT UNPOPULAR WITH INDEPENDENT EXHIBITORS

Independent exhibitors throughout the country have received recently a circular from a group calling itself the National Independent Motion Picture Exhibitors Protective Committee, which is soliciting their participation in an anti-trust suit brought against National Screen Service in the U.S. District Court for Eastern Pennsylvania.

This "Protective Committee" was formed several weeks ago by a group of Eastern exhibitors, following the filing of the anti-trust suit by Max M. Korr and Leon W. Koer, who operate six theatres in and around Allentown, Pa.

The suit, which charges NSS with monopolistic practices and alleges that agreements between the company and twelve distributors had the effect of fixing a uniform and unreasonably high price to exhibitors for trailers and other advertising accessories, is technically classified as a "class action," which means that other independent exhibitors with additional claims may join the suit as plaintiffs as the case progresses.

The circular letter, which urged the exhibitors to join in the action in order to recover damages for themselves, was accompanied by an authorization form which, if signed by the exhibitor, would empower the Committee to institute suit against NSS in the exhibitor's behalf, or intervene for him in any pending litigation or subsequent action. The circular pointed out that the Committee was not soliciting funds, and that the cost of the action would be borne by the Committee itself with no expense assessed against the exhibitor, except that the attorneys handling the case are to receive 40% of the damages recovered, plus an additional fee to be fixed by the court and paid by NSS in the event the exhibitors win the case.

Lest this circular influence any exhibitor into thinking that he has nothing to lose and everything to gain by joining this suit, HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes to call attention to the fact that exhibitor organizations throughout the country are not in sympathy with the exhibitors who have started this action against NSS, and that they have issued warnings to their members against joining the suit lest they find themselves, not only inconvenienced by required attendance at the trial, but also liable for court costs in the event that NSS wins the case and asks the court for recovery of the expenses entailed in defending the suit.

Pete J. Wood, secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, had this to say in part in an organizational bulletin issued this week:

"The measure of the damages which it is hoped to recover is the difference between the prices paid by the exhibitors for trailers and accessories purchased from National Screen and the reasonable prices which would have prevailed but for the monopoly.

"In the event that the case is contested by National Screen to the bitter end (and this, I am told, it will do), each exhibitor joining therein would have to prove his own individual damages. That he could do only by appearing as a witness at the trial and subjecting himself to cross-examination. It is not represented that the Committee will defray the expenses of going to Philadelphia for that purpose, so that intervening exhibitors may be subjected to considerable expense.

"Again, it is apparent that National Screen in defending the case will incur heavy expense, much of which will be taxable as costs in case that company wins the case. Such costs will be taxed against the plaintiffs and will have to be paid by them and they can have no protection against such costs unless the 'Protective Committee' is willing to indemnify them and post an adequate indemnity bond.

"Aside from being called as a witness and risking liability for costs, it might be said that an exhibitor has nothing to lose and something to gain by intervening in the suit. However, they are asked to put their cases wholly into the hands of these volunteer attorneys with full authority to make any compromise or settlement they see fit. If 3,000 exhibitors should sign the authorizations, and National Screen should cave in and settle for \$1,000,000, the attorneys would be assured of a fee of \$400,000 and the remaining \$600,000 would be distributed among the exhibitors, making \$200.00 each.

"Thus whenever an offer of compromise reaches a point which will insure a handsome attorneys' fee, there will be a temptation to settle however much the exhibitor's claim may be curtailed. Whatever the outcome, whether there is a recovery following a trial, a compromise or a dismissal of the suits, the rights of the intervening exhibitors will be adjudicated and they cannot later file suits for the additional amounts which they may feel are due them.

"Based on a conference with National Allied's General Counsel, A. F. Myers, we cannot recommend that our members authorize this Philadelphia law firm to implicate them in this litigation. Undoubtedly the action will be assailed by preliminary motions testing whether it is legally and ethically sound, and pending the determination of those issues our members can afford to wait and observe. If the case should survive these early tests, it will then be time for exhibitors to decide whether to join in the present proceedings or to join in other actions over which they will have some measure of control. It is not generally regarded as sound policy to commit one's affairs to the uncontrolled discretion of strangers."

The Associated Theatre Owners of Indiana, which is headed by Trueman T. Rembusch, who is also president of National Allied, had these words of caution for its members in an organization bulletin dated November 30:

". . . It is not our practice to urge any member one way or another in a matter of this kind but we do feel that we should not encourage any mass action of such a nature from our ATOI members.

"The reason for our feeling is that we in Indiana have always been able to take our problems and complaints to NSS officials and get their serious consideration. We cannot forget that men like George Dembow and William Brenner traveled to Indianapolis and sat around the table and discussed complaints with an ATOI exhibitors' committee. Secondly, we believe that we were met at least half way on those things that most needed attention and that there has been a continuing effort to compromise on the problems that have been brought to NSS since that time.

"And last there is the National Screen Service survey that is just being initiated by a committee appointed by National Allied. After the facts are accumulated this Allied committee will seek an interview with NSS to try and work

(Continued on back page)

"Short Grass" with Rod Cameron, Cathy Downs and Johnny Mack Brown

(Allied Artists, Dec. 3; time, 82 min.)

This is not an ordinary western, for the story is substantial and it has been produced on a pretty big scale. It holds one's interest all the way through, and most of the situations are gripping. There is considerable shooting, and Rod Cameron, as the hero, wins one's sympathy as well as one's admiration for risking his life to battle the lawless element. Johnny Mack Brown, as the marshal, is his typical fearless self. The acting of all is good. The outdoor scenery is, as the title suggests, sunburnt country, with plenty of rocks and sage brush to boot. The photography is good:—

Shortly after his arrival at Willow Creek, a trading post center controlled by two ruthless brothers (Morris Ankrum and Riley Hill), Rod Cameron becomes involved with an outlaw, who had killed his partner-in-crime after holding up and knocking unconscious Jonathan Hale, owner of the trading post. The outlaw, who tries to make it appear as if he had shot a holdup man, befriends Cameron and invites him to ride along with him. A short way out in the barren hills Cameron realizes the truth about the outlaw and suspects that he will attempt to kill him. But Cameron, being alert, is faster on the draw and kills the outlaw when he attempts to shoot him in the back. He then recovers the money stolen from Hale. Wounded, Cameron is found by Cathy Downs, whose father (Stanley Andrews) owned a rundown ranch nearby. There she nurses him back to health, and both fall in love. He uses the stolen money to help Andrews buy a better piece of land on a partnership basis. The land, however, is coveted by the two vicious brothers, and Cameron, unsuccessful in his efforts to oppose them, offers to sell them his share. In the discussion that follows, Cameron kills Hill when he pulls a gun on him. He then goes to Hale and returns the money stolen from him by means of an assignment of his half ownership in the ranch. Impressed by Cameron's honesty, Hale asks him to go to Silver Spur, a thriving town, to buy property for him so that he might open a saloon. He does so, and then goes away. Cameron returns to Silver Spur five years later and finds Hale doing a thriving business. He learns that Cathy lived in town as the wife of a drunken newspaperman, and that Ankrum and his gang were encroaching on the grazing land. He joins Raymond Walburn, who headed the forces determined to keep town free from Ankrum's influence. This results in open war, which ends with the death of, not only Ankrum, but also Cathy's husband, thus leaving her free to start life anew with Cameron.

It was produced by Scott R. Dunlap, and directed by Lesley Selander, from a screen play by Tom W. Blackburn, based on his book of the same name.

Good for those who like pictures with virile action.

"One Too Many" with Ruth Warwick, Richard Travis and Ginger Prince

(A Hallmark road show attraction; time, 110 min.)

(Editor's Note: In view of the fact that this picture will be handled individually as a roadshow attraction, it is doubtful if this review will have any effect on the sale of it to the exhibitors. But it is presented here for the record.)

This picture has much merit, but it has also serious defects. The chief fault is that the story is synthetic—the characters seem to obey the will of the author rather than do things that they would do in life naturally. Rhys Williams, for example, is a fine bartender, a member of Alcoholics Anonymous, but it is hard for the spectator to believe his refusal to sell drinks to those who had one too many, for not many bartenders in life are like him. Ruth Warwick does not awaken sympathy because of poor characterization. There is no cause for her to take to drink, and the abandonment of her musical career does not ring true. Had she been induced to take her first drink at some affair on the ground that it would not hurt her, and then shown taking another and another until she becomes a dipsomaniac, she would

have had audience sympathy with her. The acting is so-so. Thurston Hall is presented as a bigoted person, and the fact that he is eventually won over to the cause does not help erase the bad impression of him. Ginger Prince is a fine little actress and does well in several song-and-dance numbers, but she lacks the looks that might have made her another Shirley Temple:—

Ruth, a promising concert pianist, gives up her career to marry Richard Travis, a reporter. The change to housewife and motherhood is too much for her, and in time she takes to drink and becomes a dipsomaniac. Searching around for news, Travis goes to Rhys Williams' saloon where he finds Frank Emery, his neighbor and candidate for Mayor, intoxicated. The incident makes Travis unhappy, for his story destroys Emery's chances of election. Returning home, Travis finds Ruth highly intoxicated. He calls in the family physician who is able to effect a temporary cure, but in time Ruth has a relapse and her condition becomes worse. Travis is embarrassed when Thurston Hall, his publisher and a severe teetotaler, sees Ruth drunk. He takes her to a sanitarium, but she escapes and hides out in a cheap rooming house with a bottle. Meanwhile Emery kills himself, and Travis, busy searching for Ruth, loses his job for missing the story. When the bottle is empty, Ruth returns home and, to buy more liquor, robs the piggy bank of her daughter, Ginger. She then takes the child for an automobile ride, but her driving is so erratic that the police arrest her and place her in a psychopathic ward. Shocked, Travis appeals to civic leaders to help establish a hospital for alcoholics, and cites the fine work done by Alcoholics Anonymous. When Ruth sobers up, she realizes how close she came to killing herself and her daughter. The climax is reached when a benefit show is staged for funds for the hospital, and Travis, to restore Ruth completely, arranges for her to play the piano. This gives her courage to face the world again, and she plays like the great artist she once was.

Kroger Babb produced it, and Earle C. Kenton directed it, from a screen play by Malcolm Stuart Boylan, based on Mr. Babb's original story.

Adult fare.

"Revenue Agent" with Douglas Kennedy, Jean Willes and Onslow Stevens

(Columbia, no rel. date set; time, 72 min.)

A passable program melodrama, with enough action and intrigue to serve its purpose as the lower half of a double bill. Produced on a modest budget, the story, as indicated by the title, deals with the exploits of an Internal Revenue agent who gets on the trail of income tax evaders. It is a routine cops-and-robbers plot that offers few surprises and is, in fact, somewhat choppy and confusing. But the semi-documentary treatment and the fast-moving pace should make it acceptable to the indiscriminating action fans. The acting is fair, but there is no marquee value in the names of the players:—

When Lyle Talbot, an accountant, discovers that Jean Willes, his wife, is carrying on an affair with Onslow Stevens, his employer, he telephones the Department of Internal Revenue and offers to give evidence of a large income tax evasion racket if an agent is sent to meet him. By the time that Douglas Kennedy, the agent, arrives, Talbot is murdered by William Phillips, one of Stevens' henchmen, who had overheard the phone call. Kennedy follows up several clues and soon discovers that Stevens and Archie Twitchell, his partner in a mining company, were smuggling gold bullion from their mine to Mexico, where they sold the gold and deposited the money under assumed names in Mexican banks, thus evading payment of income taxes. Needing evidence to make an arrest, Kennedy informs the partners that he is a revenue agent, that he knows of their tax evasion scheme, and that he will hound them into prison unless they cut him in on the deal. Suspicious, they put him through a number of tests to judge his loyalty to their cause and finally accept him. He soon learns that

they smuggled the gold by concealing it in a compartment welded to the bottom of a car, in which they drove to Mexico as tourists. Kennedy joins them on one of the hauls, but first makes careful arrangements with the highway police to pick up the car at the border. The arrangements, however, backfire, and the crooks get wise to Kennedy's scheme. He is knocked unconscious and, after crossing the border, the crooks take him to an isolated spot. There, Phillips and Twitchell prepare to murder him while Stevens gets rid of the gold. But Kennedy manages to overcome his captors and, after a wild chase, succeeds in capturing Stevens with the money just as he is boarding a plane for a getaway.

It was produced by Sam Katzman and directed by Lew Landers from a screen play by William Sackheim and Arthur A. Ross.

Unobjectionable morally.

**"Storm Warning" with Ginger Rogers,
Ronald Reagan, Doris Day
and Steve Cochran**

(Warner Bros., Feb. 10; time, 93 min.)

"Storm Warning" is a powerful melodrama, finely directed and acted, but it is a grim, unpleasant picture that leaves one depressed because of its realistic depiction of mob violence and stark brutality. Set in a Southern town, the story throws a spotlight on Ku Klux Klan terrorism and the prejudice and fear spread by that bigoted organization when its members take the law into their own hands. The action is charged with suspense throughout and, by reason of its realistic handling, its dramatic impact is potent, but its vivid depiction of the ugliest aspects of murder, intimidation, attempted rape and man's inhumanity to man is much too horrifying to be classified as entertainment. Like "The Sound of Fury," which is reviewed on the back page of this issue, the picture may do considerable harm to the national interest if the Communists should play it up as an example of uncivilized doings that exist in a democracy:—

Ginger Rogers, a model, arrives in a small Southern town to visit Doris Day, her newly-married sister. As she hastens to meet Doris, Ginger sees a band of hooded men drag a man from inside the county jail and murder him. Terrified but unnoticed, she sees two of the men remove their masks before she darts away. She tells Doris of her frightening experience, and learns that the murdered man was a Northern reporter who had been framed into a jail sentence following his expose of Klan activities in the town. When Steve Cochran, Doris' husband arrives home, Ginger is shocked to recognize him as one of the hooded men. Slightly intoxicated, he confesses that he had been at the jail but babbles that the murder was unintentional. Despite her disgust with him, Ginger, for the sake of her sister, an expectant mother, promises to say nothing to the authorities. Meanwhile Ronald Reagan, the district attorney, who suspected the Klan, starts an investigation but is unable to get any information from the town's fear-stricken people. He eventually picks up Ginger, after establishing that she had been near the scene of the crime. Although she protects Cochran, Ginger, by stating that she had seen the crime committed by men with hoods, furnishes Reagan with the testimony he needs to indict the Klan; he orders her to appear as a witness at the inquest. When Hugh Sanders, Cochran's boss and head of the Klan, learns of this development, he intimidates Ginger by threatening to throw the guilt on Cochran. Ginger recognizes Sanders as the other man who had removed his mask, but at the inquest she denies having seen anything, thus enabling the Klan-controlled coroner's jury to return a verdict to the effect that the reporter had been killed by an unknown assailant. Reagan, disgusted, gives her a tongue-lashing. While the town goes on a drunken spree in celebration of the verdict, Ginger, ashamed, prepares to leave town. Cochran, drunk, finds her alone in the house and attempts to rape her. Just then Doris arrives, and Cochran knocks her unconscious when she comes to Ginger's defense. Ginger, infuriated, tells Cochran that she will now tell Reagan the truth so that Doris may be rid of him.

Cochran floors her with a punch and drags her to a meeting of the Klan in the hills, where she is flogged before a blazing cross. Reagan, summoned by Doris, rushes to the meeting with armed deputies to rescue Ginger. In the dispute that follows, Cochran, fearing that Sanders is about to place the guilt on him, shoots at the Klan chieftain. The shot goes wild, hitting Doris and killing her. Cochran in turn is shot down by the deputies while Sanders and the other Klan leaders are arrested.

It was produced by Jerry Wald and directed by Stuart Heisler from a story by Daniel Fuchs and Richard Brooks. Strictly adult fare.

**"Kim" with Errol Flynn, Dean Stockwell
and Paul Lukas**

(MGM, January; time, 112 min.)

This technicolor screen version of Rudyard Kipling's famous novel is a fine adventure melodrama, one that will surely thrill the youngsters and please their elders. It has a few slow spots here and there, and the story is fanciful and episodic, but one overlooks all this because it has considerable melodramatic action, comedy, picturesque backgrounds and an exotic atmosphere. The main asset, however, is the wonderful performance by young Dean Stockwell, who walks away with the picture as "Kim," the orphaned British-born youngster who poses as a Hindu urchin; the characterization is a fabulous one, and this talented child actor puts it over in a manner that is highly entertaining.

The story takes place in India in the 1880's, and it depicts young Stockwell as the orphaned son of an Irish soldier, who had been stationed with the British army in India. The youngster, by coloring his skin, lived among the Hindus like one of them, and by hanging around the bazaars he had learned all their sly tricks in trade. He becomes friendly with a kindly Lama priest (Paul Lukas), and appoints himself as a guide to the holy man, begging and stealing for his welfare. In the course of their travels together, Stockwell meets and makes friends with Errol Flynn, an Afghan horse trader who secretly worked with British Army Intelligence to thwart a Czarist Russian plot to seize India. Flynn gives the youngster an important paper to deliver to Robert Douglas, head of British Intelligence, who eventually discovers that the boy is the orphaned son of a British soldier. Douglas decides that the lad must go to school. Stockwell, objects, but the Lama priest induces him to go. School makes him very unhappy, but he cheers up when summer vacation arrives, and once again dons the clothes of a ragged Hindu boy and goes in search of the Lama. En route, he learns of a plot against Flynn's life, and his quick-thinking saves the horse-trader's life. Impressed, Flynn urges Douglas to make use of the boy in their work. The youngster is put through an extensive spy-training course and, in due time, becomes an important member of British Intelligence because his knowledge of the country and its people enabled him to do his work without creating suspicion. He is then assigned to a most important mission in the Himalaya mountains, where he attaches himself to two Russian spies posing as geologists in order to prepare maps and charts in preparation for an invasion. He manages to gain possession of the valuable documents, but not before he is found out and saved from a violent death by Flynn.

A brief synopsis cannot do justice to the plot's many intrigues, nor to the fantastic escapades of the young hero. Errol Flynn, though he is overshadowed by Stockwell, is good in his incredulous role, as is Paul Lukas, as the kindly Lama, and Cecil Kellaway, as an Intelligence officer of many disguises. Laurette Luez looks fine in the few scenes in which she appears. Much of the action was shot on actual locations in India, and the backgrounds, the streets and bazaars, all enhanced by the Technicolor photography, are a treat to the eye.

It was produced by Leon Gordon and directed by Victor Saville from a screen play by Mr. Gordon, Helen Deutsch and Richard Schayer.

Very good for the entire family.

out any inequities and grievances that are revealed as common. So we would first like to see what the facts are and then have an opportunity of a meeting with NSS to see if something can't be done before we think in terms of law-suits.

"But if any of our members do want to join in the Pennsylvania suit we at least think they should know exactly what they are signing. They had better inquire as to whether it might mean that they could be called to Philadelphia as a witness in the case. While the attorney's fees are contingent upon a successful case, we also wonder if, in the event of a decision in favor of NSS, those who joined in the litigation might be liable for court costs."

Charles Niles, who heads the Caravan Committee of Allied Theatre Owners of Iowa and Nebraska, has cautioned his members against signing the agreement with the "Protective Committee," stating that he, too, was acting on the advice of Mr. Myers.

The strongest condemnation of this anti-trust action, however, comes from the Independent Theatre Owners Association, headed by Harry Brandt, which, at a special meeting called to discuss the litigation, unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"WHEREAS an anti-trust action has been instituted against National Screen Service in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (Civil Action 11540) by a group which has assumed the name of 'National Independent Motion Picture Exhibitors Protective Committee,' and

"WHEREAS independent exhibitors all over the country are being solicited to join in this suit, which seeks to destroy National Screen Service, and

"WHEREAS members of ITOA have enjoyed many years of amicable relations with National Screen Service, which company has performed and continues to perform necessary services of benefit to independent exhibition, and

"WHEREAS the membership of ITOA believes this action to be harmful to the best interests of independent exhibitors,

"NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the ITOA go on record as disapproving of this action and that independent exhibitors be informed that the membership of ITOA will not participate in such suit, and

"FURTHER, that counsel for the Association be authorized and empowered to explore all legal means for the protection of the best interests of the members of this Association and to take all the necessary steps to carry out the purposes of this resolution."

Without meaning to prejudice the litigation, HARRISON'S REPORTS is in full accord with the feelings of the organized independent exhibitors that the aforementioned lawsuit against National Screen Service is a big mistake.

That the organized independent exhibitors, who are always ready to battle against injustices, are not in sympathy with this action attests to the fact that, throughout its long and honorable history, National Screen Service, aside from the great work it has done for charitable and patriotic causes, has served the exhibitors and the industry well with progressively good screen advertising, and it has never failed to right a wrong to an exhibitor whenever its attention has been called to one.

There is a good reason why the responsible exhibitors of this country hold NSS in such high esteem, for, instead of trying to get all it could from the exhibitors, it has always tried to adjust its charges on a reasonable basis so that its service will be within the reach of every exhibitor's pocket-book.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has said it before and takes pleasure in saying it again: If there were not in existence a company such as National Screen Service, the industry should have created one, for through such a highly specialized company the concentration of trailers and accessories in one source has been productive of improved service and lesser cost to the exhibitor.

The record shows that throughout the years National Screen Service has always given the exhibitors fair treat-

ment and, whenever the exhibitors had a complaint, Herman Robbins, president of the company, and George Dembow, vice-president, have always been ready and willing to sit down with the complainants to find a reasonable solution to their differences. In view of this fine record, HARRISON'S REPORTS feels confident that the responsible theatre owners of the country will see the wisdom of not lending their support to this suit.

"The Sound of Fury" with Frank Lovejoy, Lloyd Bridges and Richard Carlson

(United Artists, Jan. 15; time, 90 min.)

This melodrama is a masterpiece insofar as story, direction and acting are concerned, but, not only is it an unpleasant and unhappy picture, but it may also do to the national interest great harm at this time, for the Communists may grasp at the opportunity to show the picture far and wide to discredit us. The Nazis used "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" to show that our democratic system is corrupt; the Communists may use this picture to show how uncivilized we are. The story appeals to the passions of lawlessness and savagery. The action is so realistic that one feels as if being present in a real scene of mob rule and, even though the actual lynching of the two criminals is not shown, one feels the effect of it. The penitence of the newspaper columnist portrayed by Richard Carlson seems real, and one feels sorry for his inability to stop the lynching. The only false note seems to be the inability of the authorities to prevent the mob from breaking into the jail. In real life, the mob would have been dispersed by tear gas bombs and even by shooting and killing a few. The acting is excellent. Frank Lovejoy, the victim of circumstances, is convincing, as is Lloyd Bridges, as the nonchalant but vicious murderer:—

Frank Lovejoy, an ex-GI, settles down in a California town with his wife and child (Kathleen Ryan and Donald Smelick), but though he tries hard he is unable to obtain a job. He has a chance meeting with Lloyd Bridges, a smug, well-dressed young man with plenty of money and, in a moment of weakness, agrees to drive Bridges' car while he holds up a gas station. One crime leads to another, but Lovejoy manages to keep his complicity from his wife. Art Smith, a local publisher, sees in the petty robberies an opportunity to boost his paper's circulation, and he assigns Richard Carlson, his ace columnist, to write a series of articles sensationalizing the robberies as a crime wave. Renzo Cesana, an Italian scientist and close friend of Carlson's, is disturbed by the tone of Carlson's articles, for he felt that they were an invitation to violence, an appeal to mob rule. Lovejoy, a misfit in his career of crime, wants to quit, but Bridges induces him to go along on a final job—the kidnapping of Carl Kent, scion of the town's wealthiest family. The kidnapping is successful, but Lovejoy is horrified when Bridges, in a moment of psychotic rage, brutally murders the young man. Suffering from shock, Lovejoy is unable to face his wife. Bridges, worried about him, takes him on a round of night-clubs with Adele Jergens and Katherine Locke. In the morning, Lovejoy, drunk and on the verge of nervous collapse, unwittingly blurts out the part he played in the crime. Katherine notifies the police and, in short order, both Lovejoy and Bridges are apprehended. The brutal murder, coupled with Carlson's inflammatory articles, arouses the townspeople, and Lovejoy's wife, fearing for her husband's safety, appeals to Carlson to temper his writings. Her pathetic appeal moves Carlson, but before he can offset the damage the people, driven to violence, storm the jail, haul the two guilty men from their cells, and lynch them. When the fury of the mob is spent, Carlson, heavy with shame, vows that he will never let the people forget their vicious display of mob violence.

It was produced by Robert Stillman (associates of Stanley Kramer in the production of "The Champion" and "Home of the Brave"), and directed by Cyril Endfield, from a screen play by Joe Pagano, based on his own novel, "The Condemned." Strictly an adult picture.

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MORE EXHIBITOR SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL SCREEN SERVICE

Two additional Allied regional units have joined other independent exhibitor groups in urging their members not to accept the invitation of the so-called National Independent Exhibitors Protective Committee to join in the anti-trust action instituted against National Screen Service in the United States District Court for Eastern Pennsylvania.

The Allied Theatre Owners of New Jersey told its members that "our general relationship with National Screen has been good," and suggested that, before making any move, they communicate with the organization so that their position, if they decide to join the suit, will be fully explained.

The New Jersey Allied bulletin suggested further that, if any member was having difficulty with National Screen, the trouble could be straightened out by discussion and negotiation.

The Allied Theatre Owners of Texas indicated its coolness toward the suit by advising its members to "keep hands off."

The writer has had an opportunity to question several veteran exhibitors about their feelings in regard to this suit, and the consensus of opinion is that Heaven help the exhibitors if there were no National Screen Service, for it would mean that trailers and advertising accessories would have to be obtained from about twelve separate companies, a condition that would, not only inconvenience the exhibitors greatly, but would also result in higher costs.

REALISTIC ADVICE

In a recent bulletin to his membership, Wilbur Snaper, president of the Allied Theatre Owners of New Jersey, had this to say:

"The perilous uncertainty of our situation in New Jersey today brings to the fore the fact that grave decisions must be made, if any exhibitor is to remain in the business. Changes of policy in running time, closing down mid-week, playing time gimmicks for increasing admissions and eyes on operating costs—all these things must be weighed and conclusions drawn as to your specific theatre. You just can't lay down and throw your hands up. You must keep punching and check very carefully on anything that might have an effect on your boxoffice.

"One most important element is film. Today the exhibitor must show the best film produced, if he is to keep his audience. To do this, equitable deals with the film companies must be made. There is no such thing as buying a picture cheap today, as, in many instances, film for nothing would still produce losses. However, taking a realistic view, distributors must be willing to accept the greatly reduced rentals, if they are to keep customers on their books.

"Don't allow pressure salesmen to sell you bad

film or in any way to make tie-in sales.

"Do buy film as close to the proper price as you can.

Don't spend all your time on adjustments with neglect to your theatre.

"Do try to give the best program possible to your public.

"Don't accept the answer that is so prevalent, 'the home office says.'

"The do's and don'ts above are a few of the elements that may keep you operating."

The "perilous uncertainty" that exists in New Jersey exists also in other film territories throughout the country, particularly in areas where television has caught on like wildfire.

The trade's leaders are, of course, deeply concerned over the decline in theatre attendance, and are seeking ways and means to overcome it. But until the industry's leaders come up with a practical solution, no one can help the exhibitor as much as he can help himself; he must rely on his own business acumen to keep his theatre in operation, and he will do well to give careful consideration to the suggestions made by Mr. Snaper.

SOME INTERESTING COMPARISONS

Speaking at a recent meeting of the Canadian Television Conference in Toronto, Paul Raibourn, Paramount vice-president in charge of television, budgets and planning, pointed out that the average expense per family in connection with buying, installing and maintaining a television set is about \$100 a year. This cost, he said, is about three times the annual family expenditure for motion picture entertainment and radio, which was approximately \$30 for each of these mediums in 1946 and 1947.

The \$100 spent for television, said Raibourn, represents about 7% of the average family's income, which is approximately \$1,500 a year in the United States.

Raibourn also pointed out that television consumes about 10 hours of the 30 hours leisure time the typical wage earner now has each week, as compared to the six or seven hours that was taken up by radio each week when it came along. Motion pictures, he said, accounted for one or two hours each week, and the same figure applied to newspapers and magazines. The rest of the time was spent on cards, conversation, etc. In other words, Raibourn indicated, some of the leisure hours formerly devoted to other pastimes are now given over to television.

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not know the source of Mr. Raibourn's figures, but, assuming that they are fairly accurate, they should serve to wake up those industry die-hards who still maintain that television is not serious competition to the motion picture theatres.

"Halls of Montezuma" with Richard Widmark and Reginald Gardiner

(20th Century-Fox, January; time, 113 min.)

This Technicolor war melodrama is a superior picture of its type, one of the best ever made. It is a stirring account of the exploits of a battalion of U.S. Marines who invade a Japanese-held island in the South Pacific during World War II, but it is by no means a pretty picture, for its realistic depiction of men fighting their guts out on a bloody battlefield points up the horrors of warfare with such tremendous dramatic impact that many of the scenes leave the spectator trembling with excitement and terror. Whether or not movie-goers will be receptive to a picture of this kind nowadays is something the individual exhibitor must determine for himself, but he may be sure that those who will see the picture will find it a memorable war film, fascinating from beginning to end, grim and tragic though it may be. Some of the sequences are so thrilling that one feels the feverish excitement that grips the Marines themselves. The color photography is superb. The landing on the beach; the booming naval guns; the shrieking shells and rockets; the rattle of the death-dealing machine guns that mow down men like wheat; the flame throwing tanks; the hand-to-hand combats—all these scenes show war at its worst, and all are depicted with such realism that they make one's blood tingle.

The story itself is intriguing and highly suspenseful, centering mainly around a platoon of Marines commanded by Richard Widmark, whose group is assigned to locate the secret site of a Japanese rocket launching base, which halted the initial advance and which had to be found and destroyed within twenty-four hours lest it wipe out a general attack scheduled for the next day. When it is found out that Jap soldiers and officers are holed up in a cave in the hills, Widmark and his men are ordered to capture the cave and bring back prisoners for questioning. The assignment proves to be a most treacherous one, but after many spine-tingling incidents, in which several of the men lose their lives, the cave is captured and prisoners brought back to headquarters. The captured Japs, however, prove wily when questioned about the rocket site and, with only ninety minutes left before the general attack begins, the situation becomes desperate. But Widmark, through clever interrogation of the prisoners, and with the aid of a torn map found in the cave, finally works out the location of the rocket battery. The information is flashed to Navy airmen who, with only a few minutes to spare, demolish the rocket battery and enable the general attack to get underway.

In between the melodramatic incidents the story concerns itself with the personal problems of the men and their relationships with each other. The acting is fine, with an outstanding portrayal turned in by Widmark as the Marine lieutenant who feels an almost paternal fondness for his men and who hides his own fear and suffering to give them encouragement.

It was produced by Robert Bassler and directed by Lewis Milestone from a screen play by Michael Blankfort.

It is an inspiring picture, suitable for all.

"Grounds for Marriage" with Van Johnson, Kathryn Grayson, Paula Raymond and Barry Sullivan

(MGM, January; time, 91 min.)

"Grounds for Marriage" is distinctly lightweight stuff, but it offers one and one-half hours of chucklesome entertainment that is easy to take. The comedy is provoked by the complications that enter into the life of a young doctor who, engaged to his associate's daughter, suddenly finds himself pursued by his ex-wife. Van Johnson does good work as the pursued male, and Kathryn Grayson is pretty and pert as the ex-wife. The farcical situations that arise because of her determined efforts to win him back are highly comical. Besides a goodly quota of laughs, the film offers music to please all tastes, for it ranges from several operatic classics sung by Miss Grayson to a hot "Charleston" played by the Firehouse Five Plus Two, with Johnson doing a most amusing "Charleston" dance routine. A high spot in the

hilarity is a dream sequence in which Johnson joins Miss Grayson in a satirical rendition of "Carmen," while Milton Cross does the narration. Barry Sullivan, as Johnson's toy-manufacturing brother and woman-chaser, adds much to the comedy:—

Upon her return from a trip abroad, Kathryn, an opera singer, realizes that her divorce from Johnson was a mistake and wants to marry him again, but she finds her path blocked by the fact that he is engaged to Paula Raymond, daughter of Lewis Stone, his associate. Johnson rebuffs her efforts to win him back, and the nervous tension aroused in her causes her to lose her voice on the night of her theatrical debut. Johnson treats her for the affliction and, on the advice of Stone, tries to effect a cure by pretending that he is still in love with her. Meanwhile he has considerable difficulty keeping his association with Kathryn a secret from Paula. He calls upon Sullivan, his brother, to aid him, and that worthy loses no time making a play for Kathryn himself. In the course of events, Johnson, while lecturing to a women's group on the common cold, catches one himself. Kathryn, learning that he is ill, rushes to his apartment to nurse him and, in the process, regains her voice. Just as she is cured, Paula and Sullivan burst into the apartment and find them together, clad only in pajamas. Johnson, excited, loses his voice and is unable to explain why Kathryn had spent the night at his place. The mixup results in a reconciliation between Kathryn and Johnson, while Sullivan sets his cap for Paula.

It was produced by Samuel Marx, and directed by Robert Z. Leonard, from a screen play by Allen Rivkin and Laura Kerr, based on a story by Mr. Marx.

Suitable for the family.

"At War With the Army" with Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis

(Paramount, Jan. 17; time, 93 min.)

Although this "screwball" comedy deserves no more than a fairly good rating as entertainment, it probably will go over very well at the box-office because of the current popularity of Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. The story, which casts the two comedians as soldiers in a training camp, is nonsensical, but it is loaded with gags and situations that are funny enough to keep one laughing throughout most of the action. The chief laugh-getter, of course, is Lewis, who is highly comical as a not-too-bright private, a bungling "sad sack" who gets into everyone's hair and who is constantly being taken advantage of by Martin, who plays the part of a conniving first sergeant. Several song numbers have been worked into the proceedings to good effect, especially the number in which Martin and Lewis imitate the characters played by Bing Crosby and Barry Fitzgerald in "Going My Way." The production values are extremely modest, with most of the action confined to a few sets:—

What there is in the way of a story has to do with Martin trying to avoid Jean Ruth, a former girl-friend, who was about to have a baby and who was trying desperately to see him. When the commanding officer learns of Jean's condition, he assigns Martin to find the man responsible. Martin decides to pass off Lewis as the culprit, unaware that Lewis himself had just received word from home that his wife had given birth. When Lewis is brought before the commanding officer and is given a two-weeks pass to "fix things up," the commander assumes that Lewis will marry Jean "to make an honest woman out of her," while Lewis assumes that the commander merely wanted him to visit his wife and new-born child. Just as Lewis is about to depart on his leave, Jean shows up and the commander learns of the frame-up. Martin is even more shocked when she reveals that she is a married woman and that she wanted to warn him to stay away from her because her husband was jealous. As a result of his machinations, Martin loses his sergeant's stripes and is compelled to carry Private First Class Lewis' gear as the company prepares to embark for overseas duty.

Fred F. Finklehoffe wrote the screen play and co-produced it with Abner J. Greshler, based on a play by James B. Allardice. It was directed by Hal Walker.

Unobjectionable morally.

"The Redhead and the Cowboy" with Glenn Ford, Edmond O'Brien and Rhonda Fleming

(Paramount, March; time, 82 min.)

The action fans should find this western fairly satisfactory, despite the story's shortcomings, for it has all the gunplay and hard-riding they expect to see in a film of this type, and romantic interest to boot. The trouble with the formula plot, which takes place during the closing days of the Civil War, and which is embellished with a spy angle, is that it has been developed in so obscure a manner that one does not understand the motivations of the principals until late in the proceedings. Moreover, some of the situations place a strain on one's credulity. On the whole, however, it has enough excitement and intrigue to get by with the indiscriminating devotees of western adventure fare:—

Glenn Ford, a cowboy whose sympathies were with the South, is attracted to Rhonda Fleming, a redheaded dance-hall girl, when he visits a saloon in the New Mexico territory. Rhonda becomes mixed up in a backroom killing, and Ford, coming to her aid, finds himself charged with the crime while she escapes. Edmond O'Brien, a Union intelligence officer posing as a cattle buyer, helps Ford to escape. To clear himself, Ford goes in search of Rhonda and trails her to a mountain cabin, where he learns that she is a Confederate spy on an important mission. As they converse, O'Brien approaches the cabin and Ford goes out to meet him. Rhonda grasps the opportunity to escape once again. O'Brien tells Ford that he, too, is a Confederate agent, and that he had been ordered to obtain a message that she carried for delivery to Alan Reed, a supposed Confederate colonel. Both set out after Rhonda and, after many complicated events, finally catch up with her as she is being abused by two opportunists who were secretly in O'Brien's pay. Ford rescues her while O'Brien pretends to kill his two agents. O'Brien and Ford then escort Rhonda to Reed's secret mountain hideaway, where she gives him information about a Union gold shipment passing through the territory—gold that was needed to help the Confederacy. Reed, a shrewd fellow, unmasks O'Brien as a Union intelligence officer, but O'Brien in turn proves to Rhonda and Ford that Reed was a renegade, hated by both the North and the South, and that he planned to steal and keep the gold for himself. To make sure that nothing goes wrong with his scheme, Reed imprisons both O'Brien and Ford, and makes plans to abduct Rhonda across the border to Mexico. O'Brien, to foil the robbery and save Rhonda, sacrifices his life so that Ford can escape to warn the Union forces. Forewarned, the Union soldiers ambush Reed and his men and take them prisoners. Set free, Rhonda joins Fred to resume their romance.

It was produced by Irving Asher and directed by Leslie Fenton from a screen play by Jonathan Latimer and Liam O'Brien, based on a story by Charles Marquis Warren.

Unobjectionable morally.

"Under the Gun" with Richard Conte and Audrey Totter

(Univ.-Int'l, no rel. date set; time, 84 min.)

This gangster-prison melodrama is not cheerful entertainment, and the plot is on the improbable side, but it is fairly gripping. Its appeal, however, may be directed more to men than to women, for the story, which revolves around a heartless racketeer who shrewdly brings about the death of two fellow convicts in order to gain his own release from prison, may prove too harrowing for them. The action for the most part is slow-moving, but it keeps one tense. The closing reels offer a highly exciting chase by car and fast motor boat. The acting is good, but Audrey Totter has relatively little to do in her part:—

Richard Conte, a big-time racketeer visting Miami, induces Audrey Totter, a cafe singer, to accompany him to New York to sing in his night club. En route north, they stop for dinner in a small Southern town where, years previously, Conte had been a suspect in an unsolved murder. The victim's brother, learning that Conte is in town, comes after him. Conte shoots him dead and is arrested by John McIntyre, the sheriff. Shepperd Strudwick, Conte's lawyer, builds an air-tight defense around Audrey, the only witness,

who had been intimidated. But once on the stand, Audrey cracks and her testimony results in a 20-year prison sentence for Conte. At the prison, Conte is assigned to a road gang guarded by convict Royal Dano, a trusty called the "shooter," who, if he shot an escaping prisoner, would win a pardon. Conte shrewdly induces Richard Taber, a weak-minded convict, to attempt an escape. Dano shoots Taber dead and, as a result, is granted a pardon. When the warden seeks a new "shooter," Conte volunteers and gets the job. He then makes a deal with Sam Jaffe, a fellow-convict, to send \$25,000 to his destitute wife and children if he will attempt an escape. Jaffe agrees and, when the money is paid, Conte gives him thirty days to make a dash for freedom. Conte tries desperately to outwit Conte but to no avail; Conte shoots him dead when he makes the break. In keeping with the prison rule, Conte receives his pardon. He returns to Miami and, at gunpoint, forces Audrey to accompany him to New York. Meanwhile McIntyre, the sheriff, discovers a diary kept by Jaffe in which he set down the details of the deal with Conte. Orders for Conte's re-arrest are issued and roadblocks thrown up. Conte smashes through one of the road barriers in a desperate attempt to escape, but after a wild chase by fast car and motorboat he is caught by the police and killed, while Audrey is rescued.

It was produced by Ralph Dietrich and directed by Ted Tetzlaff from a screen play by George Zuckerman, based on a story by Daniel B. Ullman. Adult fare.

"The Second Face" with Ella Raines, Bruce Bennett and Rita Johnson

(Eagle-Lion, October; time, 77 min.)

Handicapped by an unconvincing plot, weak direction, and so-so performances, "The Second Face" shapes up as no more than ordinary program fare. Its "soap opera" type of story, which deals with the trials and tribulations of a homely but intelligent girl whose unattractiveness leaves her frustrated romantically and serves to impede her progress as a designer in the fashion world, is not only unbelievable but also lacking in imagination; one guesses in advance just how the plot will develop. Ella Raines, who dons a putty nose in this role to distort her facial features, but is later made into a beautiful woman by means of plastic surgery, tries hard to make something of the part, but the artificiality of the characterization doesn't give her much of a chance:—

Ella, secretly in love with novelist Bruce Bennett, her employer, studies dress-designing to distract herself from what she considers is a hopeless love. Bennett loves her, but he does not admit it because of a previous marital failure. In order not to suffer her nearness, he secures a dress-designing job for her in Los Angeles and arranges for her to live with Rita Johnson, another designer. When Ella reports for work, she is turned down because of her unattractiveness. Rita, feeling sorry for her, obtains a job for her as secretary to Roy Roberts, her fiancé, owner of an advertising agency. John Sutton, associated with Roberts, learns of Ella's designing talents and, by playing up to her with flattery and attention, uses her work to his own benefit. She eventually discovers his callousness and breaks off their relationship. Completely unhappy over her "ugliness," she is pleased when Bennett comes to visit her, but when he proposes marriage she turns him down in the belief that he merely felt sorry for her. Soon thereafter Roberts jilts Rita to elope with another woman, and Rita sets out to kill him. Ella, in a frantic effort to stop her, is injured seriously in a motor accident. Her smashed face is restored through plastic surgery and she becomes a beautiful woman, but the surgeon refuses payment, informing her that the bill had been taken care of anonymously. Before long many men seek her favor, particularly Sutton, but she is intent only on finding the man who had paid for her face, for she felt that she was truly beloved by him for herself. Certain clues erroneously lead her to believe that Sutton was her benefactor, and he accepts the credit, but he is soon unmasked as a fraud when Jane Darwell, Bennett's housekeeper, reveals that it was Bennett who had paid for the surgery. Ella rushes to Bennett.

It was produced by Edward Leven and directed by Jack Bernhard from a screen play by Eugene Vale. Adult fare.

"Father's Wild Game" with Raymond Walburn and Walter Catlett

(Monogram, December 3; time, 61 min.)

A pleasing program picture. It is a light comedy and, though it does not provoke side-splitting laughter, it does put one in a fairly happy frame of mind. The outdoor scenery helps the picture very much, for most of the action takes place in the woods. It is a sort of family affair, in which Raymond Walburn and Walter Catlett act as "friendly enemies," quarrelling most of the time but harmlessly. The direction is pretty good and the photography fine:—

Refusing to pay highway-robbery prices for meat any longer, Walburn decides to go on a hunting trip, and induces Catlett, the Mayor, to accompany him. They take along their sons, Gary Gray and George Nokes. Jane Darwell, an elderly busybody, learns that Walburn had closed his account at the butcher store and attributes it to financial difficulties. But Barbara Brown, Walburn's wife, assures Miss Darwell that they had closed the account only because they were going on a vacation. To make good the white lie, Barbara, accompanied by M'liss McClure, her daughter, heads for a dude ranch owned by young Fred Libby, whom M'liss liked. Meanwhile Walburn and Catlett hunt in the woods nearby using guns, while their sons hunt with bows and arrows. Fred shoots and kills a deer and, as he heads for the dead animal, he hears a shot; he investigates and finds one of his cows shot and killed. He comes upon Walburn and Catlett and compels them to pay him two hundred dollars for their mistake. When he goes back for the deer, Fred finds it gone; it had been found and taken to camp by the two youngsters. Walburn makes a deal with the two lads whereby they agree, for a consideration, to say that he shot the deer so that he might collect a fifty-dollar bet from Catlett. Arriving home, Walburn finds Fred there as a dinner guest, invited by his daughter, and learns that the young man had told about the two "stupid" hunters who had killed his cow, and about the loss of the deer he had shot. Barbara puts two and two together and explodes her husband's plan to pose as a great sportsman. At the same time, she figures out that the cost of the hunting trip had far exceeded the inflationary prices of meat.

Peter Scully produced it, and Herbert I. Leeds directed it, from a screen play by D. D. Beauchamp, who based it on his own story, "A Hunting We Will Go," published in *Woman's Home Companion*.

Suitable for the entire family.

"Sierra Passage" with Wayne Morris, Lola Albright and Alan Hale, Jr.

(Monogram, Dec. 31; time, 80 min.)

A good outdoor melodrama. Although the action takes place in what may be called "western country," it is not a western. The theme revolves around a son's determination to avenge the death of his father by three killers, who had robbed him of his savings, funds that had been set aside for the education of the son. Although Wayne Morris does good work, the acting honors are won by Roland Winters, who acts and looks the part of an ace sharpshooter. There is natural sympathy for Morris because of his determination to find the murderers. The action holds one in suspense, particularly towards the finish, where Morris corners the culprits and joins their

poker game. The ending, in which Morris shoots at his father's murderers, not to kill him, but to shatter his hands so that he may never again be able to cheat at cards, is highly suspenseive:—

At the age of thirteen, motherless Wayne Morris (impersonated by Billy Grey) sees Alan Hale, Jr., Paul McGuire and Richard Karlan rob and murder his father. Lloyd Corrigan, owner of a minstrel show featuring Winters, an ace sharpshooter, adopts Morris. For the next ten years, while working in the show as Winter's understudy, Morris maintains a relentless search for Hale to avenge his father's death. He remembered Hale as a big man with a missing finger, and with a piercing, explosive laugh. Corrigan and Winters advise Morris to forget his revenge, but the young man cannot be swayed from his purpose. Winters runs across Hale in one town and, to save Morris from committing murder, warns the outlaw to leave. Instead, Hale hires another gunman to kill Winters. Slowed down by drink, Winters is unable to defend himself and is wounded. He quits the show and goes to Morris' ranch to recuperate. Corrigan hires Lola Albright to work in the show, hoping that a woman's influence might induce Morris to forget his revenge, but, even though the two eventually fall in love, Morris sticks to his determination. When Hale and his partners hold up the train on which the show is traveling, Morris gives pursuit and, after several months, trails them to Silver Springs, where the show was playing. Morris takes his old part in the show and, during the performance, he hears the piercing laughter and recognizes it as Hale's. He cuts short the performance and follows Hale to a saloon, where he joins him and his partners in a tense poker game. When Morris reveals his identity, Hale and his accomplices draw their guns, but Morris shoots the weapons out of their hands. With Hale at his mercy, Morris, bowing to Lola's influence, spares the outlaw's life, but he shatters his hands so that he will never again be able to deal from the bottom of the deck. It ends with Morris and Lola resolving to start life anew.

It was produced by Lindsley Parsons and directed by Frank McDonald from a screen play by Warren D. Wandberg, Sam Roeca and Tom W. Blackburn.

Good for those who like action melodramas.

APPRECIATION FROM THE READERS

"I cannot help but express my satisfaction with your Reports. Your coverage on all of the problems facing our industry today is outstanding. I think that any exhibitor who does not subscribe to your paper is missing a lot."—*Henry Freidman, Ardmore Theatre Bldg., Ardmore, Pa.*

* * *

"It seems to me that I became your subscriber just twenty years ago! It was in Budapest, Hungary, and I started to build up my chain of first-run houses in that city. I left and lost everything, but our connection remained the same when I started anew in this country and I have to admit that it was your paper which helped me so much. In this country we have no previews of films, nor any trade paper, and the Portuguese exhibitor is bound to buy the features judging their values only by the Portuguese translated titles and 'stars.' Distributors and exhibitors are often amazed by my knowledge of the material advertised. Thank you!"—*Istvan Gero, Carcavelos, Venda Marilia, Portugal.*

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No. 51

RUSSIA NOW USING "MR. SMITH" AS ANTI-U.S. WEAPON

The Associated Press reported last weekend that Russia is currently using for anti-American propaganda purposes Columbia's 1939 production of "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," which dealt with the fight of a naive but honest Senator against the control of the U.S. Senate by some dishonest Senators, owned body and soul by a crooked politician.

According to the report, the picture is now being played before capacity crowds in a first-run Moscow theatre to show that the American people are being governed by a crooked legislative body.

Columbia, it should be said, has not sold the picture to the Russians. Its exhibition in that country is unauthorized and in violation of international copyright conventions. There is no information on just how a print got into Russian hands.

This is not the first time that this picture has been used as an anti-U.S. weapon. The Nazis made wide use of it in their heyday, not only in Germany, but also in other countries throughout the world, employing every means possible to facilitate its showing as an example of the "decay of democracy." Japan, too, used the picture as an example of the "degeneration of American democracy."

That communist Russia is now using the picture for a similar purpose does not surprise HARRISON'S REPORTS, for when the picture was first released in 1939 this paper expressed resentment in no uncertain terms at the reflection cast on the U.S. Senate by the theme, and predicted that our enemies would use it to malign the people of the United States and injure the prestige of our country.

HARRISON'S REPORTS was criticized severely for its stand, not only by some exhibitors, but also by some fellow-publishers. Subsequent events, however, proved the justification of this stand. That the Russians have now pounced upon this picture with glee is understandable, for they themselves could not have produced a more effective propaganda film against us.

A PRODUCER TAKES EXCEPTION

ROBERT STILLMAN PRODUCTIONS, INC.

7324 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD
Hollywood 46, Calif.

December 12, 1950

Mr. Pete Harrison
Harrison's Reports
New York, N. Y.

Dear Pete Harrison:

Thank you for the many flattering things you said about "The Sound of Fury" as a motion picture included in your recent review. Naturally, we would be the last to disagree with your complimentary statements anent the acting, production, direction, etc.

We find ourselves unable to agree, however, with your estimate of the effect of this film on the public. In this we have a distinct advantage. All your conclusions were based upon your good judgment. Ours are predicated upon an actual testing of the picture in five cities last November 15. We were pleased to learn then that this picture is considered as an important contribution to the American way of life.

In one of the cities, Wheeling, W. Va., Carl G. Bachman,

Mayor of the community, presented an award to Robert Stillman for producing "The most courageous film of the year, 'The Sound of Fury,' for its recognition to America's democratic tradition of due process and trial by jury. And as a vital message against totalitarianism and for the preservation of the American Way."

The Rt. Rev. Edmund J. Yahn, Pastor of Saint Joseph's Cathedral, in Wheeling, has this to say:

"A direct and most forceful appeal to all those who make or influence public opinion, but any adult may live to see the day when he desperately needs to remember the lessons taught by this picture."

Clyde W. Malone, Executive Secretary of the Urban League of Lincoln, Nebraska, commented:

"Without preachment or repetitious argument the evils of an attempt to render justice by Mob Action are proven. I sincerely hope that this picture will be seen by every opponent to the Democratic Way of Life."

Clarence Derment, head of Actors Equity Association, said:

"I sincerely feel that pictures of this kind, which carry on an impressive lesson without making any sacrifice to the screen's first purpose, which is to entertain, will be the means of holding audience interest against the encroachments of Television. The final mob scenes certainly surpass anything I have ever seen on the screen."

The Young Men's Christian Association of Wheeling commented thusly:

"In these days of world strife when it is exceedingly necessary for cool, calm and collective thinking of all peoples, the production of 'The Sound of Fury' is without challenge in its beneficial aspects for the American public. It is our opinion that this picture be a MUST for all who are interested in protecting the American Way of Life, freedom of the press, and a fair trial for all."

The Ohio Valley Press Club cited the picture for its "Recognition of the honesty and integrity of the working newspaperman and as a bulwark against yellow journalism."

James K. Trevey, Chief of Police of South Bend, Indiana, said:

"A remarkable picture which portrays the violence of mob rioting, also the use of unwise newspaper reporting."

Chief Lou Whitten, of Huntington, West Virginia, was so enthusiastic about the film he arranged a special screening for police, city and county officials.

Finally on the international scene, Benjamin Cohen, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations, described "The Sound of Fury" in this manner:

"I was greatly impressed with this picture and only wish that more thought-provoking pictures of this kind would reach the public. It is a fit companion for the high caliber of your previous productions; a powerful document against mass violence and the condemnation of man without a hearing or due process of law."

There are many more reactions from responsible public officials which would be of interest to you I know.

Having received these reactions we are confident that our picture can, as we intended it should, make an important contribution to respect for our American democracy and the principles which have made it the wonderful thing that it is.

Sincerely,

(signed) Robert Stillman

RS/pm

HARRISON'S REPORTS extends to its subscribers and readers Greetings of the Season

**"The Man Who Cheated Himself"
with Lee J. Cobb, Jane Wyatt and John Dall**
(20th Century-Fox, January; time, 81 min.)

An engrossing melodrama, one that is a credit to the ability of Jack M. Warner (son of Jack L. Warner), who makes his debut as a producer with this picture. Revolving around a detective who finds himself in a heap of trouble when he tries to cover up a murder committed by his married sweetheart, the story itself is fashioned along conventional lines, but it is made gripping and exciting by the semi-documentary technique, the intelligent direction, and the competent acting, particularly the performance of Lee J. Cobb, as the erring detective. The fact that both Cobb and his younger brother, a rookie detective, are assigned to the case heightens the suspense, for Cobb, to keep the truth from his brother, constantly seeks ways and means to steer him away from clues without arousing his suspicions. The tracking down of Cobb by the younger brother, after he learns the truth, makes for an exciting chase in the closing reels:—

Harlan Warde, about to be divorced by Jane Wyatt, his wealthy but spoiled wife, plans to kill her on a night he is supposed to be flying to Seattle. Jane, discovering the plot, notifies Cobb, her secret lover. Shortly after Cobb arrives, Warde slips back into the house. Jane discovers his presence and, in an hysterical outburst, accidentally shoots him dead. To protect her, Cobb takes the body to the airport to make it appear as if Warde had been the victim of a holdup. As he pulls away from the airport, Cobb's blue coupe is spotted by Charles Arnt, who also sees the body. Arnt, however, tells the police that the color of the car was green. John Dall, Cobb's brother, just promoted from patrolman to detective, is assigned to the case along with Cobb. Jane makes out that she does not know Cobb when he arrives with Dall to "break" the news about her husband's death. Cobb does everything he can to throw Dall off the right track, but Dall, determined to make good on his first assignment, discovers flaws in Cobb's holdup-murder theory. When Dall sees Cobb becoming friendly with Jane, he assumes it is a budding romance, but he soon becomes suspicious when he finds out otherwise. Taking Cobb's blue coupe, he goes to Arnt, who proves to be color blind when he identifies it as the "green" getaway car. Heartbroken, Dall bluntly accuses Cobb of the murder. Aware that he was now trapped, Cobb knocks Dall unconscious and heads for the airport with Jane to flee the country. Dall regains consciousness and notifies headquarters to set up roadblocks. Unable to get through the blockade, Cobb and Jane hide out in an abandoned fortress, but Dall traces them there and arranges for the police to pick them up. It ends with the couple being brought to trial, and with Jane ignoring Cobb to carry on a flirtation with her defense lawyer.

It was directed by Felix Faist from a screen play by Seton I. Miller and Philip MacDonald, based on a story by Mr. Miller.

Adult fare.

**"Stage to Tuscon" with Rod Cameron,
Wayne Morris and Sally Eilers**
(Columbia, January; time, 81 min.)

Although the Technicolor photography is a definite asset, as entertainment this western does not rise above the level of routine program fare. Its chief defect is a far-fetched, complicated plot, which revolves around the hijacking of stage coaches in Arizona for shipment and sale to the Confederates in Atlanta. One is asked to believe that this condition is seriously affecting the Union Army's western supply line. The best that can be said for the picture is that it should get by with the avid western fans, for what it lacks in plausibility is made up for in fast action, with plentiful shootings, chases and hard-riding. The direction and acting are no more than adequate:—

Worried over the constant hi-jacking of stagecoaches between Apache and Tuscon, the Union military authorities assign Rod Cameron, a veteran driver, to take over the stage-line's management. Cameron sets up headquarters in Apache, and appoints Wayne Morris as his assistant. When the

two men are not busy trying to solve the mystery of the disappearing stages, they fight each other for the affections of Kay Buckley, a stageline employee. While foiling an attack on one of the stages, Cameron and Morris discover that the ringleader of the band is Roy Roberts, debonair owner of a rival stageline. Roberts, playing on the anti-Yankee sympathies of some of the local men, enlisted their help by leading them to believe that they are helping the Confederacy. Unknown to Cameron, Roberts was the husband of Sally Eilers, a local salonkeeper, who was his former sweetheart. Sally had not lived with Roberts for years, but she had continued to cover up for him out of pity. Morris is captured while spying on the hijackers at Roberts' ranch, and he escapes death by claiming that he had split with Cameron in order to join the hi-jackers. Roberts dispatches Carl Benton Reid, head of the town's Southern sympathizers, to check on Morris' story. Sally tells him that Morris did not quit Cameron, but also convinces him that Roberts is working for himself and not for the South. Angered, Reid informs Cameron about the departure of Roberts' wagon train carrying stolen coaches. Accompanied by the sheriff and a posse, Cameron swoops down upon the wagon train and captures it, rescuing Morris at the same time. Roberts is killed during the battle. With the shooting over, Morris wins Kay, while Cameron resumes his romance with Sally, now free. The picture ends with both men going off to the war in blue uniforms.

It was produced by Harry Joe Brown and directed by Ralph Murphy, from a screen play by Bob Williams, Frank Burt and Robert Libbott, based on a novel by Frank Bonham.

Harmless for the family.

**"California Passage" with Forrest Tucker
and Adele Mara**

(Republic, Dec. 15; time, 90 min.)

Good photography, an interesting story, and capable acting lift this western far above the average pictures of this type; it should more than satisfy the action fans. The story, which deals with the eminty between two business partners and with their desire for the same girl has some interesting twists, for the villainous partner leads the heroine to believe that the honest partner is a crook and a killer. A good deal of shooting and a number of fist fights keep the action moving at a pretty fast and exciting pace. The period is in the 1850's:—

Heading for California, Adele Mara and Peter Miles, her young brother, become separated from their wagon train and are rescued from an Indian attack by Forrest Tucker. They meet again some weeks later in a California mining town, where Tucker operated a gambling casino in partnership with Jim Davis who, to cover up his gambling losses to Tucker, secretly robbed stagecoaches of gold shipments. Adele discovers that Bill Williams, her brother, had been killed by Tucker, but is unaware that the killing had been committed in self-defense. Williams had been one of Davis' henchmen, and Davis, to fan Adele's hatred for Tucker and win her for himself, tries to convince her that Tucker had killed Williams without cause. But she changes her attitude toward Tucker when Charles Kemper, the sheriff, and Estelita Rodriguez, Williams' sweetheart, inform her that Williams had first attacked Tucker. Undaunted by this turn of events, Davis frames Tucker for a stagecoach robbery that he himself had committed, forcing Tucker to flee from a mob of angry vigilantes. Adele, disillusioned, accepts Davis' proposal of marriage and prepares to return East with him. Just before their departure, however, she and Peter discovers that Davis is the holdup man. Lest they give away his secret, Davis goes after them with a gun. They flee up the side of a mountain hotly pursued by Davis, who traps them on the summit after an all-night chase. Tucker, hiding in the hills, sees their predicament and comes to their rescue. Davis dies in a fall off a cliff, and Tucker, exonerated, wins Adele.

It was produced and directed by Joseph Kane, from an original story by James Edward Grant.

Suitable for the family.

"The Company She Keeps" with Lizabeth Scott, Jane Greer and Dennis O'Keefe

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 81 min.)

Competent performances by the capable cast, and a story that has considerable human appeal, make this a good dramatic offering for most situations. It should appeal particularly to the distaff side, for it is a story of self sacrifice and devotion to duty, revolving around two women, one a parolee and the other her parole officer, who fall in love with the same man. Jane Greer is effective as the emotionally unstable parolee who resents her lack of complete freedom, and though her characterization is tinged with malevolence she shows enough sparks of decency to win some measure of sympathy. Lizabeth Scott is a bit too idealistic as the parole officer, but audiences will be warm in their sympathy for her sacrificial efforts to save Miss Greer from being returned to prison so that she might find happiness and a new life with Dennis O'Keefe, whom both loved:—

Paroled after serving two years of a five-year sentence on a bad-check charge, Jane reports to Lizabeth, her parole officer in Los Angeles, who had gotten her a job as a nurses' aid in a hospital. Jane is displeased, for she had hoped for more freedom and a more exciting job. To cheer her up, Lizabeth takes her out to dinner and, during the meal, she greets Dennis O'Keefe, a newspaper man, who had long sought to marry her. Recognizing O'Keefe when he comes to the hospital to visit a friend, Jane makes a play for him and maneuvers him into a date. A romance soon blossoms between them, despite Jane's reticence about her past. Jane triumphantly tells the hurt Lizabeth that she intends to marry O'Keefe, and is shocked to learn that she must have Lizabeth's permission and the approval of the parole board. Learning that O'Keefe wanted to marry Jane despite her prison record, Lizabeth recommends that the board approve. The board, however, votes to withhold its decision for a month, and Jane, convinced that Lizabeth had caused the delay out of jealousy, becomes bitter. At the hospital one night, Jane impulsively tries to help another parolee escape arrest for stealing narcotics. Both girls land in jail, and Jane finds herself faced with return to prison for breaking her parole. While Lizabeth pleads with the judge for clemency, Jane, waiting in an ante room, decides to escape and heads for the railroad station. O'Keefe follows Jane and induces her to go back and take her medicine. She accepts his advice reluctantly, and upon her return to the courthouse learns from Lizabeth that the judge had granted her plea. Expressing her gratitude and promising to stay out of trouble, Jane sets off with O'Keefe to make their wedding plans.

It was produced by John Houseman and directed by John Cromwell from a story and screen play by Ketti Frings.

Adult fare.

"Hunt the Man Down" with Gig Young, Lynn Roberts and Mary Anderson

(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 68 min.)

A moderately interesting program murder mystery melodrama, centering around the efforts of a public defender to clear an innocent man charged with murder. Given more to talk than to action, the picture drags along at a slow pace, despite a spurt of excitement here and there, and, even though the guilty person is not uncovered until the closing sequences, the story is so complicated that one's interest in the proceedings wanes. The direction and acting are fair, and the production values modest:—

Innocent, but faced with overwhelming circumstantial evidence, James Anderson, charged with murder, had escaped from custody during the trial and had evaded capture for twelve years. Picked up by the police, he claims poverty, and Gig Young, a public defender, is assigned as his counsel. Anderson tells Young that on the night of the murder he had struck up an acquaintance in a cocktail bar with Carla Balenda and Gerald Mohr, her escort; John Kellogg and Mary Anderson, his wife; Willard Parker and Cleo Moore, his fiancée; and Christy Palmer. All had gone to Kellogg's home. Christy's husband had arrived intoxi-

cated, and he had pulled a gun on Anderson for dancing with her. Anderson had disarmed him with the threat that he would have been killed if not for his friends. Later, Christy's husband had been found shot dead, and Anderson had been arrested for the crime. To prepare his defense, Young, accompanied by Harry Shannon, his father, a retired cop, sets out to locate the seven witnesses. He finds Parker, now blind from war wounds, mourning Cleo, whom he believed to be dead. Kellogg, now a drunkard, had separated from Mary. Mohr had married Christy. Carla, Cleo's former roommate, had become insane. In a lucid moment, Carla claims to know who committed the murder, but she is in no condition to testify. Later, Kellogg is shot dead by two gangsters who prove to be associates of Paul Frees, a notorious racketeer. By chance, Young learns that Cleo is not dead, but is married to Frees. He brings the case to trial and calls Cleo to the stand. She successfully wards off Young's attempts to pin the guilt on her, but, when Young has Carla brought into the courtroom, Cleo, thinking that Carla had regained her mind and is waiting to denounce her, confesses that she had killed Christy's first husband because he was blackmailing her.

It was produced by Lewis J. Rachmil and directed by George Archainbaud from a screen play by DeVallon Scott.

Adult fare.

"Operation X" with Edward G. Robinson

(Columbia, February; time, 79 min.)

This British-made drama offers a fine performance by Edward G. Robinson, and lavish production values, but as entertainment its appeal to American audiences is doubtful, for it is handicapped by a story that is obscure and by characterizations that are not clearly defined. As a ruthless financial wizard with a passion to become the most powerful man in the world, Robinson is outstanding, but his talents are wasted in much elusive talk about a mysterious "Operation X" by which he hopes to gain mastery of the world, and which is never made clear to the audience.

Briefly, the story depicts Robinson as a powerfully rich business tycoon who started life as a bootblack in London. He pays little attention to Nora Swinburne, his wife, but lavishes all his affection and wealth on Peggy Cummins, his daughter, a capricious young woman who had been spoiled and pampered all her life, despite the objections of her mother. Robinson takes no notice when Peggy announces her engagement to Richard Greene, a young journalist, for he had become accustomed to Peggy having a new fiancé periodically. As a house guest, Greene gathers information that enables him to write a denunciatory article about Robinson's lust for greater power than any other man in the world. This leads to a quarrel and separation between Greene and Peggy. Meanwhile Robinson, to surmount the last obstacle to the fulfillment of his scheme to master the world, plans to marry Peggy to the son of a Sultan, whose small country was rich in a rare mineral deposit needed to complete "Operation X." After a visit with the Sultan, Robinson returns home to find that Peggy had become reconciled with Greene, and that she planned to marry him. He rejects the proposed marriage and insists that Peggy follow his wishes. Nora, determined to insure her daughter's happiness, bluntly tells Robinson that Peggy is not his daughter after all, but the daughter of a former lover to whom she had turned because of his neglect. Shocked by this disclosure, Robinson becomes insane.

Miss Swinburne is sympathetic as the suppressed but determined wife, and Richard Greene adequately fills the role of the young journalist, but Peggy Cummins is far from satisfactory as the daughter; she is much too theatrical. Gregory Ratoff, who produced and directed the picture, has a major supporting role as Robinson's bungling aide. Robert Thoren and William Rose are responsible for the inadequate screen play, which they based on the novel "David Golder," by Irene Nemirowsky.

Adult fare.

"Prehistoric Women" with Laurette Luez and Allan Nixon

(Eagle Lion Classics, Nov.; time, 73 min.)

Although "Prehistoric Women," photographed by the Cinecolor process, was conceived primarily as an exploitation picture, it has turned out a very good entertainment because of the skillful direction, of the fact that the story is different, and of the lack of gabbing. The dialogue consists of single words, and even though these words are strange no one will fail to grasp what the characters mean. For instance, when Laurette Luez, an attractive, spirited young woman, beats up another female who had tried to take away her man, she faces the other women who were watching the fight and asks: "Allos?" No one will fail to understand that she means, "Anybody else?" There are many comedy situations. The one where the men try to free themselves from the women's bondage and the women hit them on the head with a club will provoke the audience into uproarious laughter. There are also many thrilling situations. These occur where the prehistoric animals threaten the lives of the humans, and where Yohan Peterson, a giant, attacks the camp and threatens to exterminate all. The women are attractive in their sarongs. The color is beautiful and the photography fine:—

During the Stone Age, about twenty thousand years ago, a Wise Old Woman rebels at the enslavement of her sex by the males and, assisted by several other women, breaks loose. Peterson, a giant of a man living alone in the forest, captures and kills all the tribe except six little girls and the old woman. In time the six girls (Laurette Luez, Mara Lynn, Kerry Vaughan, Joan Shawlee, Judy Landon and Jo Carroll Dennison) reach the marriageable age, and the old woman sends them out on a hunt for men. Having been brought up to hate males, they go on the hunt without kindly feelings. They come across a party of cave dwellers (Allan Nixon, Tony Devlin, Jim Somers and Dennis Dengate) and overpower the amazed men by use of sling shots and clubs. Nixon, however, manages to escape into the forest and, when his wounds heal, he sets out for the mountain lair of the women. On his way, he accidentally discovers how to make fire with flint and rotted wood, and by making a torch he is able to beat off huge animals. Nixon finally comes upon the women as they bathe in a pool, and they capture him by a sudden flanking movement. In camp the men serve as slaves while the women wait for the full moon to marry them. But led by Dixon, the men turn the tables on the women when the camp is attacked by a huge dragon and the girls seek their protection. Nixon chases the dragon by using his mystic torch. He is also able to cower the girls' pet panther, and thus they become the slaves of the men. All is serene until the giant attacks the camp, but Nixon and his tribe-mates battle him to death by means of the torch. Love springs up between Nixon and Laurette, and both are united in a primitive wedding ceremony.

It was produced by Albert J. Cohen and directed by Gregory G. Tallas, who collaborated on the story with Sam X. Abarbanel.

Harmless for the family.

"Pagan Love Song" with Esther Williams and Howard Keel

(MGM, December, time, 76 min.)

What will please the majority of those who will see "Pagan Love Song" is the fascinatingly beautiful scenery, which supposedly represents real Tahiti, the Technicolor photography, and the few songs. The story itself is thin and unoriginal, but it serves well enough as a vehicle for the Polynesian scenery, the beauty of the color photography, and the several production numbers, which center around Esther Williams' ability as a swimmer. Howard Keel, who played the leading male role in "Annie Get Your Gun," does well enough in this picture in a part that does not demand too much from him. The scenes where Keel adopts three native children possess human interest:—

Arriving in Tahiti to take over a coconut plantation inherited from his uncle, Keel, an American schoolteacher, meets Esther Williams, a half-Tahitian beauty, and tries to hire her as his housekeeper, unaware of the fact that she speaks English and is one of the island's wealthiest residents. Esther plays along with the novel situation but turns down the job. But Charles Mauu and Rita Moreno, two of her friends, "adopt" Keel as their employer and guide him to

his plantation. Expecting a luxurious place, Keel is disappointed to find the plantation run down and badly in need of repairs. The happy-go-lucky natives, led by Mauu, soon put the place in order and Keel begins to see his dream of a lazy life come true. Meeting Esther near her luxurious home, Keel believes that she works there as a servant and accepts her invitation to attend a party there that evening. He comes to the party in native dress, all set to enjoy a real Polynesian celebration, but is embarrassed to find himself surrounded by a finely dressed continental crowd, the most fashionable among them being Esther. He leaves in a huff, but when Esther runs after him to apologize he sees the ludicrousness of the situation and is able to laugh at it. In the events that follow, Keel learns that it is the custom of natives with many children to share some of them with persons who do not have any. Before long, he finds himself with three adopted children. Esther and Keel fall in love and she accepts his proposal of marriage. But a misunderstanding breaks out between them when Keel unjustly reprimands Mauu for neglecting a new crop of copra. Keel realizes his mistake, but the breach between him and Esther remains. In the end, however, Mauu and Rita put into execution a plan that brings the lovers together again.

Arthur Freed produced it, and Robert Alton directed it, from a screen play by Robert Nathan and Jerry Davis, who based the material on the book "Tahiti Landfall," by William S. Stone.

Fine for the family.

"Rogue River" with Rory Calhoun, Peter Graves and Frank Fenton

(Eagle Lion Classics, Nov.; time, 82 min.)

A good program melodrama, founded on a story that is considerably different from the ordinary run of melodramas. It was photographed by the Cinecolor process in and around Rogue River, in Oregon, and the outdoor scenery is most beautiful. The action holds one's interest fairly tense throughout. A most interesting and at times thrilling sight is the riding of the rapids. Rory Calhoun is natural in his part, and Peter Graves, a newcomer, may go places if given good story material. But the best work by far is done by Frank Fenton, as the Chief of Police; it is said that he has been around Hollywood for a long time but has gone unnoticed. He should now have no trouble getting strong parts:—

Peter Graves, a state policeman, returns to Rivers Pass for a month's vacation with Fenton, his father, the local police chief, and Rory Calhoun, his happy-go-lucky cousin, whose latest love is Ellye Marshall, a voluptuous blonde recently arrived from San Francisco. When the local bank is robbed of \$50,000 in gold dust and a small bag of gold is found in the shack of a wizened old prospector, Fenton arrests him despite his protests of innocence. Despondent, the old prospector commits suicide, but he leaves a will revealing the location of some buried gold dust, and the will stipulates that, if the gold is linked to the robbery, all except that portion stolen from the bank is to go to Calhoun; but if no such evidence is found, all the gold is to go to Fenton, provided he erects and publicly dedicates a monument to him. The gold dust, worth \$73,000, is found, and the theory that part of it was stolen from the bank falls to pieces. As a result, Fenton keeps the gold, but he is dismissed as police chief for refusing to admit that it is part of the bank loot. In the events that follow, Calhoun discovers that Ellye, his girl-friend, had been connected with the holdup, and forces her to admit that the gold found in the shack is part of the loot. Calhoun confronts Fenton with this information and demands the return of the gold as provided by the will. Fenton refuses to believe him. Calhoun, angered, taunts Fenton so viciously that Fenton shoots him down. Before he does, Calhoun succeeds in informing Graves. Fenton takes to the woods, and Graves goes after him to persuade him to give himself up. Just as he finds his father, a stranger appears on the scene and, at gunpoint, demands the gold. Fenton overpowers the man and gains from him a confession that he is Ellye's husband and that the gold inherited by Fenton is part of the bank loot. Infuriated, Fenton kills the stranger. By this time a posse arrives. Fenton, feeling that life is now not worth living, refuses to surrender and is shot to death.

It was produced by Frank Melford and directed by John Rawlins from a screen play by Louis Lantz.

Suitable for the family.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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No. 52

COMPO BOARD TO CONSIDER TOA PROPOSALS JANUARY 11

A meeting of the executive board of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations to be held on January 11-12 in New York City has been called by Ned E. Depinet, COMPO president.

The most urgent organization problem to be discussed at the meeting, said Depinet, will be the proposals made by the Theatre Owners of America relative to its request for greater representation on COMPO's board.

The text of these proposals, submitted by a TOA committee headed by Ted Gamble, is as follows:

"Theatre Owners of America is made up of a number of representative state and regional units, having complete autonomy, covering every section of the country. In order to enlist the widest possible support of these organizations to membership in the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, the Theatre Owners of America's committee on participation in COMPO recommends that each of these units be given the same voting rights and privileges as each present charter member of the Council of Motion Picture Organizations. It is assumed that all other members of COMPO would be given this same consideration on an equitable basis.

"Further, it has been the understanding of the members of TOA that the principal objective for which the Council of Motion Picture Organizations was formed was to enlist on a national basis all the members of the industry to improve the industry public relations. We would like an understanding that any departure from the purpose for which COMPO was formed would take place only with the unanimous consent of the Board."

In recommending that each of its state and regional units be given the same voting rights and privileges as each present charter member of COMPO, the TOA has come forth with a proposal that promises plenty of fireworks at the forthcoming meeting, even though "the same consideration on an equitable basis" is recommended also for the other members of COMPO.

With the TOA presently comprised of 28 regional units, it would, under the proposal, have greater voting power than any of the other four exhibitor groups in COMPO, namely, National Allied, which is comprised of 20 regional units, the Pacific Coast Conference of Independent Theatre Owners, which is made up of six regional units, and the Independent Theatre Owners Association and the Metropolitan Motion Picture Theatres Association, each of which would be entitled to only one vote. It is doubtful if any of these exhibitor organizations will approve a plan that does not give each of them an equal voice.

To be considered also is the number of votes that may be demanded, under this proposal, by the Motion Picture Association of America (the producer-distributor organization) and the Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers. Both associations are comprised of about 50 individual members, and since these members are being asked to match dollar for dollar the contributions made by COMPO by the exhibitors, it follows that each member that meets this request will be entitled to ask for a vote under the TOA proposal of "consideration on an equitable basis."

It would seem, therefore, that the TOA proposal would entitle the ten original charter members to have approximately 110 representatives on the COMPO executive board, each with the right, not only to vote, but also to veto. And therein lies the proposal's greatest weakness, for, while it is always possible to obtain a unanimous vote when only ten votes are involved, it is virtually impossible to do so when there are more than 100 votes involved, particularly when the interests of those voting are so diverse. There is bound to be one or more recalcitrants who will not see eye-to-eye with the majority. And since only one veto, under COMPO's by-laws, is enough to kill off any proposal, it is doubtful if the organization, under the set-up proposed by TOA, will prove to be anything more than a debating society.

There is a feeling in the trade that the TOA proposal is merely a "feeler," sent out to determine the attitude of the other COMPO members, and that it will not press too hard for its adoption if a reasonable alternative is proposed. HARRISON'S REPORTS sincerely hopes that an attitude of conciliation and compromise will prevail at the meeting, otherwise it may lead to a final break between TOA and COMPO, with the result that the industry's efforts to establish a unified public relations program will be weakened considerably.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON'S FINE PUBLIC RELATIONS WORK

Edward G. Robinson, the popular actor, did a great service to the motion picture industry last week when he, tired of being branded either as a Communist or a fellow traveller, went to Washington and appeared voluntarily before the House Un-American Activities Committee and asked that he be heard, under oath, so that he may once and for all clear himself of the whisperings that have branded him as a Communist. He produced records that should clear him of the accusation and stop the whisperings.

The Committee was so impressed that Representative Francis E. Walter, Democrat of Pennsylvania, one of the leading members of the Committee, commented favorably on the manner in which Mr. Robinson conducted himself on the stand, and stated that the actor "definitely" gave him the impression that he was neither a Communist nor a fellow traveller.

The effect that Mr. Robinson's frankness has had on the Committee may cause the reopening of the investigation of alleged Communism in Hollywood. Representative Walter declared that he favors a full and complete investigation to find out who is responsible for the charges of Communism, who is and is not a Red, and to give every one who has been accused in whispering campaigns an opportunity to appear before the Committee to clear his or her reputation.

The reopening of the probe no doubt would be on a friendlier basis, as a result of Mr. Robinson's straightforwardness, and it cannot help doing much good for the motion picture industry, which has been accused of harboring Communists.

The press has already been influenced favorably by Mr. Robinson's voluntary appearance before the Committee, and by the fine impression that he created among all its members.

Well done, Mr. Robinson!

"Korea Patrol" with Richard Emory
(Eagle Lion Classics, Jan.; time, 57 min.)

A mediocre program war melodrama. Produced on a very low budget, it is a shoddy job of picture-making that is obviously being rushed into release to capitalize on the current headlines. Even though the running time is only 57 minutes, the producer has resorted to considerable padding to give it that length. A good deal of the footage is made up of newsreel clips that have been tied in with the staged action, but the manner in which this has been done is unskillful. What there is in the way of a story is an extremely thin affair that barely holds one's attention. Keen observers will notice that a number of action shots are duplicated several times in the course of the proceedings. The direction is poor and the acting so amateurish and mechanical that hardly any effect is produced on one's emotions. The best that may be said for it is that there is plenty of action:—

While on maneuvers with Al Eben, Danny Davenport, Wong Artarne, Harold Fong and Benson Fong, a five-man patrol of South Korean and American soldiers, Lieut. Richard Emory receives word that the North Koreans had crossed the 38th Parallel. Emory finds himself cut off from headquarters, but shortly thereafter Li Sun, a South Korean scout, arrives with orders for Emory to blow up a strategic bridge to halt the Red onslaught. Benson Fong recognizes Sun as a weakling and suspects him of being a Red sympathizer. Pushing its way through dangerous enemy territory, the patrol has several skirmishes with Red patrols, during which Davenport and Harold Fong are killed. On the way the men pick up Teri Duna, a native girl, who offers to lead them to their objective. Eben and Artarne lose their lives while holding off the enemy so that the others may reach a hill overlooking the bridge. Sun, panic-stricken, tries to run away but he is knocked out by Fong who accuses him of cowardice. Emory and Fong continue to make their way to the bridge but both are wounded trying to get through the Red fire. Sun, now ashamed of his fear and anxious to redeem himself, gets through the enemy fire, plants the dynamite under the bridge, and helps Emory and Fong to safety before the explosive goes off, thus delaying the Red advance.

It is a Jack Schwarz production, produced by Walter Shenson and directed by Max Nosseck from a story and screen play by the producer and Kenneth G. Brown. Unobjectionable morally.

**"Gambling House" with Victor Mature,
William Bendix and Terry Moore**
(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 80 min.)

A fairly interesting if not exceptional gangster-type melodrama, with a message on Americanism. The story, which is the old one about the reformation of a gambler, offers little that is novel and is fashioned along familiar lines, but it manages to hold one's attention to a fair degree. There are some good moments of excitement in some of the gangland activities depicted, but on the whole the action is not brisk; it is, in fact, draggy in spots because of excessive talk. Victor Mature is colorful as the gambler whose imminent deportation makes him realize the value of citizenship, but William Bendix, as a big-shot racketeer, and Terry Moore, as the social worker with whom Mature falls in love, are no more than adequate. On the whole, the picture will have to depend on the marquee value of the player's names:—

Having killed a man in a gambling game, Bendix, to avoid trouble with the police, offers Mature \$50,000 to take the rap for the killing and claim self-defense. Mature agrees, but to protect himself against a double-cross he snatches from Bendix a little notebook containing a record of his illegal activities. Mature is acquitted at the trial only to be picked up by the immigration authorities. As he enters the Immigration Service building, Mature manages to slip the little book into the pocket of a pretty girl in the lobby. The immigration inspector informs Mature that, since he was born in Italy and was not naturalized, the Service felt that he should be deported as an undesirable alien. He is released on bail, pending a hearing, and begins a search for the pretty girl. He discovers that she is Terry Moore, a socialite member of a league that helped newly-arrived immigrants. He makes her acquaintance and retrieves the book. They fall in love and, through her work, he gains a new appreciation of the value of American citizenship. Bendix, seeking to get away with the \$50,000 he had promised Mature, has two henchmen beat him up and recover the book. Mature avenges himself by staging a holdup of Bendix's gambling joint. Terry, who had driven Mature to the club without realizing his motive, is furious with him. On the day of the hearing, Mature arranges with a friend to turn the \$50,000 over to Terry to help immigrants. Mature, making his plea before the judge, acknowledges that he owes a debt to society and the United States, and pleads that he can best pay that debt by becoming a citizen. Moved by his plea, the judge releases him. Bendix, seeking revenge, catches up with Mature on a deserted street and orders two of his gunmen to shoot him. Mature tells the gunmen not to shoot because Bendix, to save his own skin, will "rat" on them. Realizing the truth of his words, the gunmen shoot Bendix instead just as a police car arrives on the scene and takes them into custody. Mature sets off to meet Terry.

It was produced by Warren Duff and directed by Ted Tetzlaff from a screen play by Marvin Borowsky and Allen Rivkin, based on a story by Erwin Gelsey. Adult fare.

**"Double Deal" with Marie Windsor,
Richard Denning and Taylor Holmes**
(RKO, no rel. date set; time, 65 min.)

A weak program melodrama, produced on a modest budget, but it has enough action and excitement to get by as a supporting feature in small-town and neighborhood theatres where patrons are not too fussy about story details. Revolving around an unemployed oil-rigger who becomes involved in a complicated maze of events, including several murders, the plot has a touch of mystery, but it is so lacking in logic that those who are the least bit discriminating will find it painful. The stilted direction and the ordinary performances do not help matters:—

Hunting around for a job, Richard Denning arrives in an Oklahoma oil town, where Carleton Young hires him to do a rush job on a "wildcat" well he is trying to sink before his lease expires. Denning learns from Marie Windsor, Young's protegee, that Fay Baker, Young's sister, who controlled most of the oil lands in the territory, was determined to delay the drilling job since the land would revert to her if her brother failed to bring in the well. Fay attempts to win Denning over to her side by vamping him, but

he turns her down. She then arranges for thugs to beat up Denning, but he sticks to the job despite his injuries. Young is killed under circumstances that point to Denning as the killer, but he manages to clear himself with the sheriff. Marie, having inherited Young's estate, persuades Denning to stay on the job. When Fay sees to it that the drilling rig is sabotaged, Marie goes to see her in the hope of making a deal. Fay is shot dead mysteriously while Marie is with her, and Marie is taken into custody by the sheriff. Taylor Holmes, an alcoholic old lawyer who had befriended Marie and had been taking care of her affairs, persuades the sheriff to release her to see if the mysterious killer will make an attempt on her life, too. The killer, however, proves to be Holmes himself; he had once owned all the oil lands in the area, and he hoped to get them back by disposing of the present owners. Holmes kidnaps Marie and takes her to his ranch to kill her. Denning, seeking legal advice, goes to the ranch and discovers Marie's predicament. He rescues her in the nick of time while the sheriff shoots down Holmes.

It was produced by James T. Vaughn and directed by Abby Berlin from a Screen play by Lee Berman and Charles S. Belden, based on a story by Don McGuire. Harmless for the family.

**"Two Lost Worlds" with Jim Arness,
Laura Elliott and Bill Kennedy**

(*Eagle Lion Classics, Oct.; time, 63 min.*)

The value of "Two Lost Worlds," which has been produced on a fairly large scale, lies in the fact that it lends itself to extensive exploitation. It will undoubtedly arouse the interest of those who will look at it, although its entertainment values are spotty. The clipper ship being attacked by pirates; the battles between prehistoric animals; and the eruption of the volcano with its earth-shaking effects, which remind one of "Green Dolphin Street," should thrill the spectator. The volcano scenes are highly realistic. There are, however, whole stretches that are slow and boring; nevertheless, it should go over fairly well as part of a double bill. The action takes place early in the 19th century:—

Convinced that he had built a ship that would revolutionize the shipping industry, Jim Arness sets out in his clipper for a South Pacific island to pick up a prize cargo and thus establish a franchise. En route, the clipper is attacked by a pirate ship. In the running battle, Arness is wounded, and the clipper, captained by Tom Monroe, puts into a small port, where Arness is left behind for convalescence. There, Arness falls in love with Laura Elliott, daughter of Pierre Watkin, the local magistrate, thus disrupting her engagement to Bill Kennedy, owner of a sheep ranch. Raiding the town, the pirates kidnap Laura and Jane Harlan, and kill Laura's father. Arness and a small group of survivors, including Kennedy, Tom Hubbard, Gloria Petroff and Bob Carson, chase after the pirate vessel in Carson's sloop and, after a fierce all-night battle, board the pirate ship and rescue Laura and Jane. On the voyage home, the ship is wrecked on an uncharted island inhabited by prehistoric animals. After encounters with the monsters, the group finds itself endangered by a violent volcano eruption. The hot lava and falling rocks kill Jane and Kennedy. Meanwhile Monroe had returned to the colony where he had left Arness and, not finding him, had sailed for home. During the voyage he passes near the uncharted island and is attracted by the eruption and by signals

from shore. He moves into shore and finds Arness, Laura, and Hubbard and Gloria, and takes them aboard. The clipper ship then sets sail for Salem, with Laura and Arness deciding to marry.

It was produced by Boris Petroff and directed by Norman Dawn from a screen play by Tom Hubbard. Harmless for family audiences.

**"The Flying Missile" with Glenn Ford
and Viveca Lindfors**

(*Columbia, January; time, 93 min.*)

The fact that this is the first picture dealing with the work of the Navy with guided missiles makes it a film of timely interest, one that lends itself to exploitation. As entertainment, however, it does not stack up as much, for it is bogged down by a cliché-ridden, unimaginative script that is overlong and unconvincing. The film is at its best when it centers around the workings of the rocket propelled missiles, its value as a war weapon, and the activities of the Navy at the Missile Test Center at Point Magu, California, but it becomes most ordinary when it gets into the melodramatic and romantic phases of the story. For instance, the audience is asked to believe that the Navy would tolerate the antics of the hero who, beset by regulations and eager to prove that missiles launched from submarines can wipe out a large fleet, steals strategic materials and supplies to secretly build his own missile launching platform. That the direction and performances are less than inspiring is due mainly to the poor script material:—

Glenn Ford, commander of a submarine, is bitterly disappointed when his ship is theoretically sunk during a Navy war game. He believes that if submarines were equipped with deck launching platforms to loose the Navy's new guided missiles, submarines could then stay out of the range of destroyers. To test his theory, he receives permission to take his ship to the Missile Test Center at Point Magu for special training with guided missiles. There, Ford reports to Henry O'Neill, the admiral, and meets Viveca Lindfors, O'Neills' secretary. It is a case of love at first sight, and he sees her as much as possible in between the missile lessons. The lessons prove too slow to suit Ford and, impatient, he arranges with his crew to raid a warehouse on the base for materials, which they use to secretly build their own launching platform. Just as the project is completed the Admiral walks in on them and reveals that he had been aware of their activities. He then informs Ford that the work had been in vain because the base was out of missiles. When Viveca inadvertently reveals that missiles were available at an Army Ordnance Depot nearby, Ford takes a flying trip to the depot and persuades the commanding general to let him have several of the weapons for his experiment. In his haste to fire the missile, Ford accidentally kicks a safety switch, causing an explosion that kills one of his crew and that leaves his legs paralyzed. The death of the crewman so affects Ford that he develops a mental block that retards his recovery. All efforts to rouse him out of his lethargy fail until Viveca accuses him of being a quitter. Affected by the accusation, Ford snaps out of his mood in time to join the fleet in new exercises and to participate in a new missile test that proves his theory.

It was produced by Jerry Bresler and directed by Henry Levin from a screen play by Richard English and James Gunn, based on a story by Harvey S. Haislip and N. Richard Nash. Suitable for the family.

THE READERS HAVE THEIR SAY

TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX FILM CORPORATION

444 WEST 56TH STREET
NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

November 28, 1950

Mr. P. S. Harrison
Harrison's Reports
New York, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

I am writing to you in connection with the editorial which appeared in the November 18 issue of "Harrison's Reports," regarding exploitation of feature pictures in newsreels. Personally, I feel that the industry needs this, as it needs support from every direction at this time.

My feeling still is, as I wrote to the Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Kansas & Missouri, Inc., that the exhibitors who complain at this stage about the content of the newsreel that happens to promote the motion pictures are in effect "fiddling while Rome burns."

Never was there a time when a greater need existed for an aggressive, forward-looking, unified step forward to cope with really major problems. Yet, we have one branch of the industry complaining to another about what seems to me to be a minor issue.

While I can understand the contention that an exhibitor does not like to be charged for a certain footage of news that contains material regarding a coming attraction, I do not believe this objection is a serious one. The use of the newsreel for advertising our industry has been most moderate and I have not heard that the public has complained.

The complaint that advance advertising of a particular picture puts the exhibitor at a disadvantage as to terms on such a picture is not, in my opinion, an insurmountable one because exhibitor and distributor can certainly talk out a question of this kind. The benefit that can come from an all-out endeavor to promote motion pictures through the powerful medium of the newsreel, one of the greatest instruments on earth for reaching the public, should easily outweigh any anxiety that might be felt on this subject.

Just look at what television and radio are doing, combining and uniting in an attempt to keep themselves afloat and to woo the American public away from the motion picture-going habits they have formed over the years. A \$2,000,000 sales and advertising campaign has been instituted. Not a word is mentioned about price, or shortages or color, but only strongly worded newspaper and radio advertisements, designed simply to "sell television," to keep receivers installed in the people's homes. These campaigns are for the purpose of offsetting any possible trade slump. This is the idea behind the cooperative institutional advertising campaign launched by the combined chiefs of advertising of leading TV manufacturing companies.

Ads are full-page ones of 1000 lines in 1100 newspapers in TV areas, and it started November 17. Besides this, spots on 250 radio stations in non-TV areas started November 6.

I have been told that \$2,000,000 budgeted campaigns will run indefinitely for as long as they are needed.

They have already approached educators and editors, emphasizing educational value of TV and its importance in the lives of children, as well as its influence on the family group. The emphasis is: Stay home and be entertained free.

Therefore, in my opinion, we must use every means at our command to prove to the public that our proud slogan, MOVIES ARE BETTER THAN EVER, is not just idle boasting, but actually a fact. What better medium can there be to prove this than our own screens? Certainly, the use of the newsreel occasionally for this purpose cannot be construed as "exploitation," when the exhibitor has every whit as much to gain as the producers and distributors, if not more.

When we talk about a unified industry and tackling our mutual problems together for the common good, I think this is exactly what we mean. Anything else is bickering and

definitely detrimental to every effort that has been made so far to unite our industry to fight shoulder-to-shoulder for betterment. The newsreel is a very important and influential medium and its occasional use to promote interest in a forthcoming attraction is beneficial to all concerned.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely,

(signed) Spyros P. Skouras

FANCHON & MARCO, Inc.

6838 HOLLYWOOD BLVD.
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

December 22, 1950

Mr. Pete Harrison
Harrison's Reports
New York, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

I read with a great deal of interest your article in the December 16, 1950 issue entitled "More Exhibitor Support for National Screen Service."

It isn't my purpose to take any sides in any law suit, and I shall not try in this one.

However, the efforts of others to get all exhibitors to join in a suit against National Screen seems to me completely inconsistent with the spirit of our Government.

As you well know, it is deemed improper under the anti-trust laws for parties to combine for certain purposes.

It seems to me the combination of parties in a suit against National Screen is covered by the same moral or philosophical prohibitions that lie behind the anti-trust law.

I am no lawyer and I do not profess to know whether any one else's conduct in a particular matter is legal or illegal, but so far as I am personally concerned it would not appear proper to me for me, as an exhibitor, to join in this suit.

As I have indicated, I do not profess to know anything about the facts, or the law in connection with the suit of these exhibitors against National Screen, and I offer no opinion in that connection.

So far as I am personally concerned, my experience has been that for many years National Screen has rendered a real service to exhibitors generally. According to my personal knowledge, our theatres have been served well and reasonably.

One need only compare the prices and method with which exhibitors were confronted before National Screen developed its service to its present point of efficiency in order to realize what a constructive service National Screen has contributed to the motion picture industry.

Many exhibitors will remember when the film companies had their own trailer service, and in my opinion, this was more of a burden upon the theatres than any supposed burden that may have been exerted by National Screen.

In closing I want you to know that I have refused to join any suit against National Screen for the two reasons I have indicated above.

Briefly summing them up, the first is because of my disinclination to "combine in law suits." If I have a claim against anyone, I believe I should proceed to litigate my claim, and if anyone else has a claim it is up to him to proceed according to his own discretion. I think this apparent effort to secure "numbers" for plaintiffs is akin to the mob psychology of adding to the crowd, and it somehow does not seem consistent with the basic idea of our judicial system that each man should be heard on his own.

And, finally, National Screen has served us well, has served us reasonably, and, therefore, whatever one may think about joining with others in certain kinds of law suits certainly we have no reason to join anyone in this particular matter.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely

(signed) Harry Arthur

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